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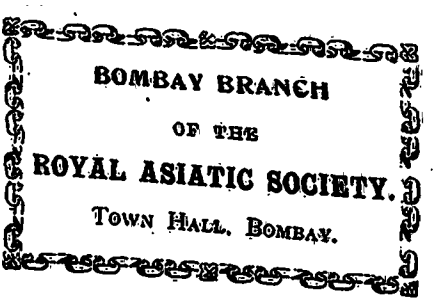


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# THE LIFE

OF THE REV.

# JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF;

WITH

PORTIONS OF HIS CORRESPONDENCE.

26669
ac

EDITED BY

JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

FC
9/2/65

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# PART III.

[Continued.]

# AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

# JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

## CHAPTER VIII.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

### 1838.—Ætat. 63.

January 1st.

I HAVE a Hope that this will be the last Year of my Life: to wish it otherwise would be extreme imbecility. I cannot expect any sound Improvement in my Health. The Slow Fever which has uninterruptedly been upon me for more than twenty Days, must proceed from a total derangement in the biliary Organs, which, though it will not kill me, must increase my general Debility and Helplessness. Every Year must deprive me of some remnant of Activity. My Solitude, combined with the Necessity of being idle, renders my Life intolerable. All Hopes of Usefulness have died in me. Bitter indeed has been

the Disappointment which the clear Perception of some men's Minds—men in whose Love of Truth I trusted, has brought to my Soul. All have made their Peace, at least a long Truce, with established Error. They are miserably afraid of following it up to its Sources. What chance then is left for positive Truth? None on the part of Man's honest Exertions. The Course of Things will probably shake these monstrous Structures of Superstition by indirect means; but till that Crisis arrives, even the most clear-sighted men are agreed to let them be undisturbed, except when some external Advantage may be snatched out of the Hands of those who manage the Interest of the grand Delusion, by Law established.

Yet, in spite of this Despondency, I do not wish that my own course had been different. I have laboured in vain, but I have laboured in the Field of Truth: my Wages have been Pain and Misery, but I love them infinitely above the Wages of Dishonesty. I thank God that I have been able to endure so much for that which *is* and *must* be eternally true. Let the Grave close over my Sufferings, my Weaknesses, my involuntary Errors. I feel that Death will give a sort of Consecration to my imperfect Efforts. This is a most consoling Anticipation.

Jan. 7.

Very unwell. Some observations of Suabedissen in his Principles of Philosophical Religion gave a religious direction to my thoughts, especially in connection with my present state. The Book continued the whole day to assist me more or less, and my feelings of Resignation and Confidence were strengthened.

---

Jan. 21st.

I can hardly control my impatience. But I wish to keep steady to the Principle of Trust and Hope.

---

*To Mrs. ——.*

Feb. 6th, 1838.

My very dear Friend,

I cannot satisfy myself by merely sending a verbal acknowledgment of your most valuable Present. In spite of the most tormenting Cough I will prepare a few lines before I go to Bed; for in the morning I am not capable of any Effort. Every circumstance which could make the gift not only valuable but *dear* to me has been combined by your kindness. I can assure you I never possessed more interesting Keepsakes.

My ardent Prayers for your Happiness, now inseparable from that of my most kind and dear Friend, your Husband, will incessantly be addressed to the Supreme Fountain of Life, and Goodness, and Love.

Yours ever gratefully and affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

*To Professor Powell.*

Liverpool, Feb. 10th, 1838.

My dear B. Powell,

The first use I have made of my returning power of close attention has been to read your work, for a copy of which I wish you to accept my thanks. I have derived much pleasure and instruction from it. It is written in a most excellent spirit, and shows in every page a perfect acquaintance with natural philosophy, and the whole circle of science. The examples are luminous, and the style so clear that it requires only common attention in the unscientific reader to follow the argument through every division of the subject. You have very clearly shown the nature of the argument of Induction, upon which great uncertainty and obscurity prevails among many. *Induction* has generally been considered as something invented by Lord Bacon. I think it unfortunate that he used that word, taken from the then powerless Aristotelian language. I have examined most of the passages in which Aristotle speaks of the ἐπαγωγὴ, especially comparing those in the Analytics with one in the 2nd or 3rd chapter of the Rhetoric, and it is clear to me that he uses that word vaguely. The prominent sense he gives it—that in which the common logics use it, arises from the superficial view of its contrast with the syllogism, whence the conclusion follows from two *Universals*, one of which is embraced by the other. The Induction διὰ πάντων, is mentioned merely as the counterpart of the logical universal, in which what is asserted of the whole is asserted of each individual contained in it. But Aristotle himself knew that the attempt to make out a universal from the examination of every individual is impossible. He uses the word ἐπαγωγὴ in a loose sense, merely in opposition to syllogism, and when the argument cannot proceed by *Media*: in

a word, *Induction*, in the language of the Aristotelian logic, means, though imperfectly and without the slightest knowledge of the subject, *experimental, practical* proof. Lord Bacon, I believe, took it up in this sense, but by a wonderful effort of genius discovered the principal conditions which could give validity to experiment and observation, so that even one well-ascertained fact shall be the foundation, not of a logical universal, but of the belief in a universal law of Nature. You have explained and illustrated this subject most satisfactorily.

The enemies of science will be furious against you. It is in vain that we argue with them. The root of the evil lies very deep. It is my settled persuasion that most people who think they believe in God believe in an Idol. You give an excellent hint upon this at p. 156. Science opposes this idol-worship: it does not allow a belief in an extra-mundane God, who appears, like a clock-maker, setting now and then his own machinery to rights. But I am plunging into too deep a subject, when the paper is nearly full.

Tell Mrs. B. Powell that I wish her to consider this letter as a certificate that I am getting back into my old routine of health, if it deserves that name. I trust that if the weather continues tolerably mild, this severe attack will have left scarcely any trace of additional suffering in the course of ten days or a fortnight.

Believe me, with sincere esteem and friendship, my dear B. Powell,

Yours ever truly,
J. Blanco White.

---

Feb. 11th.

Much better. My legs continue swelled, but I have had some appetite. Reading, but without any

particular object, except in Suabadissen, to impress myself with his excellent views of Religion. Nobody to see me.

---

February 14th.

Having very lately read Professor Powell's Work *On the Connection of Natural and Revealed Truth*,* where various new English Writers on Subjects which involve this Question are quoted, I was struck with the confusion of Thought which all of them betray. Yet some of these Writers exhibit great Acuteness, and can urge a Fallacy with prodigious Power. Enthusiasm, I am convinced, is generally the source of this irregular, feverish Activity; but there is still another cause of these clever Aberrations. In this country, it may be safely affirmed, not ONE Mind applies itself to the Study of Religion with a due preparation by means of mental Philosophy. Even those who devote some Attention to Logic—that (as it is studied) rather barren Branch

* I take this opportunity of recording my great regard for Professor Powell as a friend, and my high estimate of his talents and knowledge as a man of Science and Literature. He has never given way to that most formidable party at Oxford, whose enmity against all enlightened views wreaked itself against Dr. Hampden, when he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity. Professor Powell stood by his persecuted friend, with the greatest firmness. He never has disguised his opinions, or shrunk from declaring them, even when his vote had no one to support it against a numerous Convocation. I believe this happened upon the question of the admission of Dissenters to the University. But I fear my praise may be turned against him.—J. B. W. Aug. 24th, 1839.

of Science, turn away from it before what is unquestionably useful in the common Dialectics has incorporated itself with the other stores of their Mind.

But there is another study still more necessary than Logic, for the acquisition of sound religious Knowledge, of which there is scarcely a Notion among the British Divines—I mean the Study of the Sources, Limits, and Application of the mental Faculties, according to their primitive, essential Nature. The absence of such acquaintance with our Faculties, the total inattention to the Number, Nature, and Extent of the Capacities given to us for knowledge—not in a confused Mass, but naturally distributable into compartments, which have a reference to our various mental Powers—this ignorance of what should be the Foundation of all regular Instruction, shows itself in almost every page of the theological writings which daily multiply among us.

There is to me, a most striking Result of this Ignorance of our own spiritual self in the blind-man's buff Debate, which is carried on between those who contend that we must go to the Bible if we are to have any knowledge of God, and those who, certainly much more rationally, though not quite correctly, insist that *Natural Theology* must prove to us the Existence and Attributes of God, before we can derive Instruction from Revelation. I wish it to be clearly understood that I do not place these two Parties on the same intellectual or philosophical level. I am persuaded that the Study of Nature, *by itself*,

does not lead to the Acknowledgment of the Deity; but I am on the other hand convinced that this Study, assisted, however unconsciously to the Observer, by the light of that Rationality of which the simple, yet sublime Principles are most easily developed in Man, will certainly lead to God.—The Point of comparison between the two parties is this: that neither of them can see, that for the *correction* of the imperfect, and not unfrequently monstrous Notions of God, which their respective favourite Sources—*especially the Bible*—give them, they must have recourse to something which is neither external Nature, nor the Bible. Now it is practically obvious that both apply to some Principle within their own Minds. To me it is clear, that if they were well acquainted with their SPIRITUAL Self,—the invisible World within them—if they had begun their philosophical and theological Studies by examining *What is in Man*, they would not have involved themselves in this unmeaning controversy. Experience, and Common Sense, however, might teach them that the Principle, which enables both of them to perceive and to correct the Notions of God which they derive from what they call Nature and Revelation, should take the Lead of all other Guides.

"God has spoken to me," says some primitive Sage to his People, whom, on the hypothesis that Revelation alone can lead to the Deity, we must suppose totally ignorant of both the Word and Notion about to be introduced by the Prophet.—"What do you

mean by God?" might answer some shrewd Thinker among them.—This Question would be re-echoed by every one not already subdued by hierarchical Authority: and most naturally, for how is it possible that Words can convey to men any Notion to which there is nothing analogous in their own Minds?

But let us imagine that the Sage was allowed to proceed, and that he delivered some Doctrine or Statement, as from God.—"God," he would say, "told me so and so." "I do not like your Message" (might the Objector reply): I think the Being, whom you call God, has deceived you."—"Impossible!" would the Prophet retort:—"God cannot lie." Indeed, as men are constituted, the majority of the Assembly would applaud an Answer, which, in all ages, will be approved by the Wise and Good.—The Answer then is true; but whence does it derive its Power? Surely not from Revelation—for that is the very Question—whether the God that is supposed to speak can deceive. If Revelation is the only Source of our Knowledge of Him, we can know nothing of his character when he begins to address any Man in human Language. The invisible or *falsely visible* speaker (for in whatever Shape he might show himself, the Image employed would be already a gross Misrepresentation)—the floating Voice might come from some wicked Agent unknown to us. Nevertheless, let us once grant that God speaks, and the unanimous sense of mankind is, that he speaks the Truth, that He cannot deceive.

There is then a Source of Knowledge respecting God, which is not only independent of the Method of Instruction called Revelation, but appears to exist in all Men. It is this source then which all thinking Men should endeavour to trace up to the very Dawn of spiritual, i. e. rational Life in Man; carefully observing its phenomenal Exhibitions, and anxiously separating what in it is primitive and universal, from what is accidental and individual. A truly philosophical Work on this most important Point—this Foundation of true Religion—is very much wanted in England.

---

Feb. 18th.

Mr. Studely Martin,—to whom I gave a little Herodotus, with a Latin inscription, expressive of my Thanks for his kindness, especially during this last illness.

---

Feb. 22nd.

I have lately observed that the increase of the constant feverishness which has been upon me since the 19th Dec., has taken place somewhat later every night. For the last three days I observe that the pulse is quicker just about ten o'clock when I leave my dressing-room. To-day I find it going at the rate of one hundred and twenty. It is true, I have had no rest.

Same day.

Dr. Woodward (I believe that is the name) asserts in his printed Sermons, that God cannot prevent *all* Evil: I speak upon Professor Powell's authority as to the Fact.—This View may raise very pious feelings in Dr. Woodward and his Hearers, and prevent their being angry with God, as *very pious* People are apt to be. But it is demonstrable that such a Being as Dr. Woodward worships, *is not* God. It may be a *Jupiter Opt. Max.* subject to Fate, but God, the *Supreme*, he is not. The original Idea of God is inseparable from that of Unlimitedness. Man is conscious of his own *limited* Existence, and, without the necessity of a Logical inference, perceives, in his own Limitation, the Existence of the *Unlimited* that limits him. Dr. W.'s God must be limited in regard to his Power over Evil, by one greater than He. That limiting-Unlimited is God. If Dr. W. does not perceive the force of this Demonstration, he is incapable of abstract philosophical Reasoning.

---

March 4th.

The Prospect of my Day, under this long Illness:—

Here I am, at half-past 10, A. M., having forced a cup of coffee and a few pieces of toast down my throat, looking about for means to pass away the Day.—Books?—their Power over me is gone for the present. Exhausted by a succession of sleepless Nights, which are for the most part past in violent

coughing, obliged to take rather strong Doses of Opiate for the chance of some Rest, as the Day comes on, but disappointed even of this, by the regular symptoms of my habitual bowel complaint, which begin about that time, my pulse rises to 120, my head feels full and hot, all my limbs, especially my swollen legs, refuse me ready service. But the most harrassing symptom is that of an unconquerable drowsiness, which seizes me minute after minute in the very act of exerting myself to check it. It would be fortunate if I could lie down on the Sofa and make up for the wake of the night; but the moment I lose myself in sleep, a panting seizes me, and gives me the sense of choking.—(It has come upon me just as I wrote the last Word of the last Sentence.) In this miserable struggle must I pass the time between this and that of going to bed, and then begin the incessant coughing which harrasses me for three or four hours at least, awaking me afterwards (if I fall asleep) every half hour.—And yet there are People who wish me to live on in this State!

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*To* ——.

March 7th.

My dear Friend,

Neither the exhaustion nor, what is worse, the irritation which a most distracting night has occasioned, shall prevent my sending a line of acknowledgment——. But I cannot address my thanks to you alone. You have it not in your

power to do any act of benevolence, in which another shall not have had some share either of activity or suggestion.

Yours affectionately,

J. B. W.

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*To Miss L——.*

Liverpool, March 10th, 1838.

My dear Miss L——,

Though I am reduced to a state of aggravated suffering, which makes both reading and writing difficult and fatiguing to me, I will not allow your kind Letter to lie unacknowledged for a long time. Ever since the 19th Dec. last, when I was seized with Fever, Fainting, and a variety of troublesome Symptoms, I have not had one day of tolerable health, and, what is worse, not a night of even middling repose. A harrassing cough keeps me awake from hour to hour, in spite of strong doses of Opium. I cannot read in the Day-Time, because both a morbid want of interest and attention, and an overwhelming drowsiness, prevent my following whither the Author would lead me. In a Word, my Days are employed in pure endurance of Pain and Dejection. Even walking across the Room requires a considerable Effort. But I think that as the Spring comes on, I shall fall again into the miserable State in which I have been since I had the Influenza the Winter before last; a long Period of absolute confinement to my Rooms, but which, compared with the present, might be called one of Health.

I have not yet heard anything that can justify the expectation of a Theological Journal in Liverpool. But even if the external Arrangements were ever so satisfactorily made, I should doubt the success of the Undertaking. I see no possibility of an agreement between the Contributors, much less among the Subscribers, as to certain vital Points;

such, for instance, as the Question of Inspiration. By *Agreement* I mean, the Toleration of unlimited Freedom in that Inquiry: there is, on the one hand, too much Superstition; on the other, too much Fear of public Opinion. England, I fear, will never have a free theological School. I hope when you go to Germany you will have Opportunities of consulting the truly enlightened and independent Men who fearlessly oppose the Mass of superstitious old-Womanish Pietism, which Alarm has collected together in that Country. What you chiefly want is to be directed to the leading Works both in Philosophy and Theology. You will be surprised to find that even the most bigoted Germans do not venture to support Theories which in England are still regarded as the Basis of Christianity. Such is the effect of free and frequent Discussion, in the total absence of the worldly and political Influences which affect everything in England. One hundred á Year, probably much less, make an *independent* Man in Germany; the *artificial* necessity of having five times that Income, to begin *Respectability* in England, makes Independence a Name.

I feel very much fatigued, and must take leave of you.

Believe me, ever yours sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

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March 11, 1838.

No rest: hardly able to read, owing to the drowsiness and shortness of breath. The thought of going to Hamburgh, and taking a room among the gentlemen in the famous *Allgemeine Krankerhause*, occurred to me this morning as practicable, with Ferdinand's assistance during the passage.

March 12th.

Dr. Sutherland came, and encouraged my idea of getting to Hamburgh, but showed the necessity of subduing the dropsical swelling before I can set out. The vehement desire which I feel to quit this solitary prison subdued my reluctance to medicine.

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March 19th.

Very unwell. I am glad that I now think I am fairly in my last stage of life: sooner or later, the end cannot be distant.

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The recollection that on this day it is full three months since this severe illness attacked me, made me remark that this very day, all the time I lived in Spain, used to bring about an annual feast at my father's house. The 19th of March is, in the Roman Catholic Church, dedicated to Joseph, the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Those who, like myself, bear the same name, keep it as their *Saint's* day. Their friends, and even persons who are not in the habit of frequently meeting, call at the door, inside of which there is a table, upon which they leave their cards, or write their names on a sheet of paper laid upon it for that purpose. Asking to dinner is very rare in Spain, except on such occasions when those who can afford it ask a large party, which generally become very riotous and noisy when

the wine has gone round several times. The truth is, that the object of such dinners is not so much to eat, as to be merry. Even my father forgot some part of his severe ascetism, and had a joke for the company. It may be easily conceived with what effect it would come from a man who, from one end of the year to the other, never entered into any sort of conversation except upon business.

The contrast between these recollections and my state of suffering on this very day, could not easily be overlooked, when once it arose before the mind. But, thank God, though such remembrances can never be indifferent to me, I have, both theoretically and practically, raised myself above the childish emotions which arise from an indulged feeling of repining against the primitive Laws of our Being. People wish that Nature stood still for their sakes.

So far am I from making these recollections the subject of a sentimental tragedy, that the circumstance of my having convinced Dr. Sutherland this morning that my dropsy must be left to itself, and that, owing to the old complaint in my bowels, all active remedies would only increase my misery, is a source of satisfaction to me; and if I believed in days and seasons, I should be inclined to think that Providence had chosen this particular day, to give me in it the most distinct intimation (though it is far from being as distinct as I wish) of approaching death, which I have ever received. It is true that you cannot persuade the physicians that such intima-

tions *may be* welcome; it is also true that in a complication of diseases, such as I suffer from, they cannot form a deliberate opinion in regard to the issue, and are naturally averse to anticipate what people call the worst. But in spite of all this, I cannot but perceive that even Mr. Archer, who is naturally sanguine, thinks my case not free from danger. To me it would be the greatest satisfaction, if I had a moral certainty of my approaching End; otherwise every little appearance of *improvement* alarms me. This is a simple fact. Such appearances affect me as a foaming, retiring wave does the wrecked mariner who is just laying hold of a projecting rock on the shore.

There is another circumstance which casts a gleam of cheerfulness over the impressions of this day. The *Moral* World presents, upon the whole, a most hideous and distorted appearance. But the experience of my *reflecting* life has shown me that it happens here, as in some pictures, which, looked at with the naked eye, are a perfect mass of confusion, but which show regularity, and even beauty, the moment you look through a lens, constructed on purpose to unite the scattered lines in a proper focus. My favourite lens is a virtuous man: it brings into harmony the discordant parts of the moral world. And it is seldom, if ever, that seasons of affliction do not bring forward some of these mediators between God and man—these soothers of the afflicted and perplexed Soul. For where do they come from? Who

sends them on these missions of mercy? Can it be any other but that Power against which the sufferer is tempted to repine? Hard indeed and obstinate must have been my heart, if the free and unaffected exhibition of Dr. Sutherland's benevolence and disinterested kindness had not reconciled me to sufferings, without which he probably would have remained to me only a pleasant acquaintance.

Again that excellent man, Mr. Archer, has appeared in all his native worthiness, under circumstances which might have fretted the temper of a less goodnatured and candid man. Nothing can exceed his openness, good temper, and kindness.

These are some of the pleasures and advantages which, in the midst of gloom and suffering, this, *probably* my last, 19th of March has brought to me.

P.S. I forgot to mention that Dr. Sutherland brought me a message from a person or persons whom he was not at liberty to mention,* entreating me not to forego, from fear of expense, any thing which I might reasonably wish for. I returned my most cordial thanks, with the assurance that at present I have sufficient for my expenses. God will certainly reward disinterested generosity.

* I have strong reasons to believe that this offer came from Dr. and Mrs. Whately.—Aug. 18, 1839.

*To Mrs. ——.*

March 29th, 1838.

My dear Mrs. ——,

I think it is in a great degree worth the while to be in suffering, since it occasions such displays of kindness as I enjoy from you and all yours. At all events, it is a wise and merciful arrangement of Providence, that the wants and afflictions of some individuals are thus relieved by the sympathy of the good and friendly. Many, many thanks for the tea, which is like a *bouquet* of violets.

You can hardly think what satisfaction it gives me to be present to your mind and that of your husband, when otherwise you might be tempted to break the spell which is to secure your knowledge of German. Such an influence is to me the highest reward of true friendship.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

P.S. You may be sure that I shall always be glad to see you: I only fear that when I am in such pain as makes me unable to suppress groaning, it may be too painful for you to be present.

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April 3rd.

A wretched morning. Mr. —— called, and, declaring that I looked very well, made me talk an hour and a half, giving me to understand that much of my illness arose from the Imagination.

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April 9th.

A day happy to me in the open declaration I have heard, that the people who come near me are convinced I cannot recover. Mr. —— proposed my

removing to his house. I answered that I would do so, when I had a strong probability of not giving trouble for a long time.

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*To* ——.

22, Upper Stanhope-street,
April 11th, 1838.

My dear Friend,

At the Height of the Distress which I have lately suffered, something whispered that it was impossible I should be left to make a Wreck of my Intellect in that Storm: and now I see (can I be mistaken?) that in the wise Order of Events, the greatest and most seasonable Blessings have been connected with the close of my painful Life. I thought the World did not contain a Nook where I might tranquilly wait for my Dissolution, supported by the Love of those whom no human Being can exceed, both in kindness, and in that most important Self-Denial, and willingness to submit to disturbing little Troubles, without which kindness is but a barren Sentiment. And yet I can hardly think it true that you wish to give me up a part of your House, where I may see the Face of true Friends, somewhat in an habitual way, and be spared the horrible feeling of coming Solitude, the moment you close the Door after one of your frequent calls,—calls, indeed, which cost you a great deal of Trouble, and which, nevertheless, must leave the essential, incurable Evil of my Forlornness almost untouched.

Well then, not to be prosy.—Dr. Sutherland called soon after I saw you, in the afternoon of yesterday. I mentioned our conversation, and earnestly requested that when he saw the End approaching, he might plainly tell me, in order that I might be removed to your House. But you know his manner: he would have me go without

Delay. "You have (these are nearly his words) a mortal Disease which, at your Age and in your circumstances, must sooner or later end fatally." This Declaration did me more good than I can express; yet the Pleasure was considerably damped by his adding, that I might have considerable temporary improvements of Health. I did not press for a more explicit Declaration, but it appears to me plain that the circumstances of the case do not admit any probable Chance of my getting through next winter, should I live to encounter the first Season of Frosts and Catarrhs. This is a Point of great importance in regard to my Resolution. As to the Details of the execution, we might easily talk them over. To my Imagination and Heart it holds out so many collateral Attractions, that I require all my severe Philosophy to keep the alluring *Fire-flies* of that treacherous Faculty from settling in swarms even in the consecrated portions of the Mind.*

How, how can I requite your Friendship, my dear Friends?

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*To the Rev. J. H. Thom.*

22, Upper Stanhope-street,
April 21st, 1838.

My very dear Friend,

I have so long and so earnestly set my Heart upon seeing you in actual possession of my little Collection of Books, (for Library is too ambitious a Name in this case,) that, whenever, as it now and then happens, I have any reason to conceive that certain Symptoms indicate a sufficiently destructive character to put an end to this most harrassing and lingering state of hopeless suffering, the first thing that occurs to me is the wish to see my Books in

[* The fear of being a source of constant anxiety to his friends took strong possession of him the very day this Letter was written, and withstood all persuasions.]

your Possession. I had, long since, bequeathed them to you in my Will, but I dislike this method in the transference of a small portion of Property in which my Heart, not my Purse, is concerned. The Books, all and every one of them, are yours: you will do me the greatest kindness by accepting them unconditionally, and without ever thinking that any living being has ever had a ground for expecting to succeed in the Possession of them. My nearest Relations are incapable of an interested feeling upon this subject; and they know besides that even in point of Equity, I could not charge you with the long, tedious, and laborious business of preparing an Edition of such Works of mine as may be wanted after my Decease, without giving you a share in the copyright. My son, therefore, to whom I leave that copyright, will after all consider himself under a high obligation to you, not only because you accepted the laborious commission without the remotest idea of some kind of honorary return for your time and labour, but because by your acceptance of a gift of pure kindness from me, you will relieve him from a sense of encroachment upon your valuable Time and Industry, which he could not but endeavour to relieve by some acknowledgment of that indispensable fatigue, and anxiety, which alone can give to my Works, printed and in MS., any pecuniary Value. Excuse my entering into these Details, but I wish, once for all, to remove every scruple from your Mind. Let me then enjoy the great Pleasure of seeing the Books removed to your House. Grant me this Favour *fully* and *freely*, and you will thereby procure for me another lasting sense of Happiness, besides the many which have arisen to me from your Friendship.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

P. S.—I perceive how weak my Head is by the many blunders which I found upon reading this Letter. But I must send it as it is.

*From Dr. Channing.*

Boston, May 4th, 1838.

My dear Sir,

Your last letter, which I received in January, deserved an earlier answer, for it overflowed with the kindest feeling; but, like yourself, I have suffered for some time from indisposition, which has taken away my energies, so that it is an effort to put even these few lines on paper. I have wanted to write you the more, because Mr. Ripley has put into my hands your long letter, and this started a thousand thoughts which I wished to communicate. How much it would gratify me to visit you, and to receive your views from your own lips.—I found that I differed from many of the opinions you expressed to Mr. R. I do not see the necessary connection between inspiration and infallibleness. Inspiration is but one of many methods of teaching, and a method which does not at all subvert the principles of our nature; and this nature is imperfect, erring, incapable of comprehending *any* truth thoroughly, unable to comprehend *moral* truth beyond its own degree of purity, and compelled, if I may so say, by the law of mental association, to blend its errors with the better views it has attained. Man may learn much under God's ordinary and extraordinary modes of instruction; but the history of the apostles, under Christ's teaching, shows us that under the happiest auspices, under miraculous aids, man still conforms to the laws of his present infant stage of being.—The notion has been, that the infallibleness of the apostles was necessary in order to the protection of their converts from error. But this protection is an impossible thing, and cannot therefore be the end of divine arrangement. No teacher can secure his pupils from error, can impart his mind *perfectly* to others. Our reception of the thoughts of a higher mind must be proportioned to our capacity, our pre-conceptions, our moral progress. The very circumstance, that men are taught by

*words*, makes a mixture of error necessary, for different ideas are more or less associated with words, in different minds. How little did Christ's disciples understand him, whilst he was with them; and were the apostles able to protect their converts from error? How immediately was Christianity obscured by the Jewish and Heathen notions of its first professors. Undoubtedly inspiration, as well as outward means, may communicate most precious light—but are we obliged to think the light unmixed with darkness? I apprehend much error has arisen from heathen notions of inspiration, as if it transported a man beyond himself, suspended his faculties, &c. This is not only at war with reason, but contradicted by the New Testament.—So the value of inspiration to the recipient has been exaggerated, as if it made him more than mortal. To me, it seems a higher act to arrive at a great truth through the development of our own rational and moral nature, than to be taught this truth authoritatively by another. These are very hasty suggestions—but I think they will meet some of your difficulties. As to your objection, that men cannot be commanded to believe Christianity, on the ground of external evidence, I reply that such evidence *alone* is not the ground on which belief should be founded. I will only add, that you seem to make faith too much an intellectual exercise, an assent to propositions. I regard it much more as a spiritual aspiration, a thirst for perfection, a trust in Christ as commissioned by God to guide us to perfection, to inward, moral, celestial and eternal life. I can add no more: let me only ask, if there is not an important difference of opinion between the letter to Mr. Ripley, and "the Law of Libel re-considered." Will you allow me to say, that I was pained by the thought, that you might lose some of the supports and strength which we especially need as we approach the end of life. You will say, that we must think of *truth* alone—but are we not to see one impress of truth on doctrines, in their adaptation to the highest wants of our nature? I write in great haste,

and from an impulse which I know you will appreciate. It will give me great pleasure to hear that you are gaining strength, and able still to employ your powers for your own enjoyment, and the good of your fellow-beings.—On looking over my letter, I feel how imperfect it is—but such is my confidence in you, that I send it, for I know not when I can write another.

Very respectfully,
Your sincere friend,
W. E. CHANNING.

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June 4th, 1838.

Is there no sympathy in mental Freedom? Does not the Heart burn within me, when I meet with a man devoted to the purest interests of Reason?—It does indeed with an enthusiastic vehemence. Here is an American Unitarian, a Minister at Boston, who has brought me letters from Mr. Ripley, and who laments that I am not able to see him; who assures me of the esteem of many who, more or less, devote themselves to the pursuit of Truth. His note brings warmer tears into my eyes, than ever the Methodistical twang drew into those of the Members of the most enthusiastic sect.

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*To Mrs.* ——.

June 11th, 1838.

My dear ——

As I suppose Mr. —— must have already gone out on charity visits, I must trouble you with the request, that if you have any edition of Cowper's Poems with his Portrait,

representing him in an old-fashioned cap, very common when all the world wore wigs, you will send me the volume containing that portrait. The general irritability of my skin extends to my head, in consequence of which I have had it shaved this very morning, and want to try to make a person, whose needle I employ, understand what sort of cap I want. I lament the disappearance of that neat, simple, venerable cap. But old men are grown fops.

I am weaker every day, but there seems to be no end to this loss of strength.

Yours, my dear ——, most affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

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*To Dr. Channing.*

Liverpool, June 13th, 1838.

My dear Sir,

Your Letter of May 4th reached me yesterday through Mr. Martineau. Were it not for the high reverence and great interest which I feel in regard to you, I should not think of taking pen in hand, in my present wretched state. I am entirely deprived of the use of my lower limbs, and the swelling of the dropsy in the larger cavities threaten to choke me. But I must clear up one or two important points which I fear you have not seen in the light which I intended in my Letter to Mr. Ripley. My Argument is not *directly* against Revelation, but against the established universal Theory of Revelation. In that Theory the basis of the whole consists in the necessity which man is supposed to have of an *ultimate* certainty. Now, I demonstrate that such a certainty is not producible by any of the contrivances of the Churches or Priesthoods: the *Theory* there-

fore must be false. Revelation and Infallibility have been, and are, universally connected, for upon this connection, and the supposition that to be right on certain points is necessary for Salvation, depends the force of the popular Argument. Now, is it possible that God should leave Mankind without a final, immoveable ground to stand upon? This is the drift of my Argument. On the other hand, I believe in more Revelation than most Divines. I believe in the internal presence of God in the sanctuary of the Soul. I take—nay, I know—that Presence to be active and real. That Oracle is the source of every Truth, of every Virtue in Man. Seneca has expressed this fact with more force and clearness than any Christian writer:—Sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque nostrorum observator et custos; *hic, prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat.* I could quote still finer passages from the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, but my strength fails me.

You allude to a passage in my Letter on Anti-Religious Libel which opposes the view of Revelation, which you conceive I gave in my Letter to Mr. Ripley. Alas! my dear Sir, considering the mental wilderness through which I have travelled, it is to me surprising that the bearings of my Map are still tolerably consistent. The History of my doubts on the Theory of Revelation is in my MS. Memoirs. That subject was the occasion of my first anxiety and disappointment on my joining the Church of England. Incapable of yielding where conviction does not take me by the hand, yet it is impossible to conceive how my Heart has always yearned after conformity with those whom I loved and valued. Hence the bursts which now and then appear in my writings, bearing the stamp and tone of certain religious views, which at that moment I thought I had reconciled with right Reason. The one you allude to was among the last. The substance, indeed, of that view remains within me; but not the form. I live and move, and have my being in God. Supported by this ulti-

mate conviction, this result of my life, I await approaching Death with tranquillity, insensible to the clamour of Divines, who prescribe a Method of Salvation. *God* is my Saviour: in Him I fully trust.

There is almost a moral certainty that this will be my last to you, and that it will not be followed by many to others. I beg you, therefore, to bear me witness that I die a Christian, because I am convinced that God has granted me the SPIRIT of Christianity: that I die a Unitarian, because I consider the spirit of our Body nearer to the spirit of Christianity, than that of any other Denomination. I trust that the Unitarians, especially in America, are destined by Providence to give the final blow to the superstition which still clings to, and degrades the Gospel.

May God preserve your strength many years to be a Leader in this great Work.

I am, with most sincere Esteem and Friendship,
My dear Sir, faithfully yours,
J. BLANCO WHITE.

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*To Mrs. ——*

June 15th, 1838.

My dear ——,

You will not say that I do not treat you with all the confidence in your affection which a Father might have. Your linen cap pleases me so much, that I enclose it for the purpose that you will make me another like it. I will not apologise; for you have spoilt me.

Have the goodness to give the two enclosed Letters to your husband, and desire him in my name, when he has read them, to seal mine, and forward it. I quite forgot them yesterday, though I had them before me; but the musical (now unmusical) Box had put every thing else out

of my head, and the Dublin business was, as indeed it is still, eating into my heart.

May Heaven preserve your feeling soul from such trials.

Yours most affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

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*From Professor Norton.*

Cambridge, June 15th, 1838.

My dear Friend,

A Letter which I received yesterday from Miss Park makes me fear that this may never reach you. I write it with deep feeling, as a solemn and affectionate farewell to one whose life has been devoted to a constant struggle in the cause of truth and goodness, and whose spirit is now passing to a higher sphere to receive its exceeding reward. The benefit of your labours and sufferings will not be lost upon earth. Your example and your writings will continually bear more and more fruit.

I will not write many words. Farewell! but not for ever. I now claim your friendship when we shall meet, for the first time, hereafter. It will not be many years hence, perhaps not many months.

May the blessing of God be with you here and through eternity. Once again, Farewell!

Your friend,

Andrews Norton.

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*To Professor Norton.*

Liverpool, July 17th, 1838.

My dear and respected Friend,

Yours of the 15th June has reached me this morning. Its contents have affected me deeply, and I thank God that

I have enjoyed, what to me is always one of the most sublime and convincing proofs of God and Immortality, the effusions of sincere friendship from a person like yourself. I prepare this answer without delay, lest the tormenting disease should take a sudden turn and carry me off, without my having made a full acknowledgment of your kindness. I linger in a most distressing state, deprived of the use of my lower limbs, and incapable of getting out of my chair by my own efforts. Easily exhausted by talking, and much more by thinking, I am, with very few exceptions, quite alone, and unable to follow up any reading which requires attention. My physicians have long declared to me their opinion that I cannot recover—a declaration which filled me with joy, and the accomplishment of which, like hope delayed, now makes my heart wither. I feel no enthusiastic raptures, nor does my Imagination, trained, as it is, not to take the lead, venture to suggest any of her material pictures. But I have the most calm assurance within me, that the God whom at all times I have loved, and whose will I have always most sincerely wished to obey, will provide for me that happiness for which I may be best fitted. Free from all *theological* fears, no terrors surround me while waiting for the long-desired dismissal from this life. I heartily thank God, who has so disposed the events of my mental course that I do not find in myself even a trace of the Superstition in which I was most anxiously educated. This indeed more than repays all my sufferings.

May God's blessing be upon you and Mrs. Norton, and may your efforts in the pursuit of truth be successful. My acquaintance with the tone and character of your mind makes me sure that, wherever that mind may be in communication with my own, the tie of friendship will unite them.

Farewell, my dear friend.—

With gratitude and esteem, I am yours,

J. Blanco White.

July 11th.

My sixty-third Birth-day. I would it were my Birth-day into another state of existence!

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*From Dr. Channing.*

Boston, July 11th, 1838.

My dear Sir,

In a letter from Miss Dix, I have just received very unfavourable accounts of your health; more so than you have yourself given. I cannot but hope that you will be strengthened again, for I feel that you must have much to say which you have not yet communicated to the world, and in usefulness you would find much to enjoy. But a higher will disposes of us. In this we will rejoice. Were this world our only sphere of action, we might be depressed at the thought of our unfinished plans, and of going,—before half of our work was done. But the very power which grasps at so much more than we can accomplish, is prophetic of a higher life. You and I have been conscious of a spiritual activity, which physical debility has prevented our bringing out. Is this to perish? Is the thirst for higher truth and holiness an illusion? The Fountain from which our spiritual life has flowed is inexhaustible. Will our aspirations after larger communications fail?

I have been a little troubled on account of a letter I sent you, after reading yours to Mr. Ripley. I had scarcely sent it when I felt that it was very crude, and I could not but fear that you might set down the free suggestions of a letter as deliberate conclusions. I now regret sending it,—from the apprehension that it may have stirred you up to efforts of thought injurious in your debilitated state. I beg you not to think of answering it,—nor to think of it farther.

I have been taken almost wholly from labour for four months, but am slowly rising. Sometimes I dream of a visit to England, and the thought of seeing you comes to me among the chief pleasures I should meet abroad; but I shall probably prove a dreamer.

I do not mean to trouble you with a long letter. I write to express my sympathy, and to assure you of the sincere respect with which I remain,

Your friend,
W. E. CHANNING.

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July 14th.

A letter from Mr. ——, saying little that gives me the idea of despatch of business. He is evidently afraid of frightening me with the view of *testaments* and *wills*. This seems to be an universal silliness.

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July 27th.

Received a most kind letter from Lord Holland, and, under a frank of Lord Melbourne, a Note from one of his Secretaries, desiring me to apply to the Treasury to receive £300 from the Queen's Royal Bounty. This is truly royal!

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Aug. 1st.

Wrote to Mrs. Whately declining the £100, this year.

Nothing in the whole course of my life, has perplexed me more than this lingering in the face of Death.

I became totally crippled in my legs, about six weeks ago, and have been, during that time, unable to rise from my arm-chair. Mr. Thom has been all this time out of Liverpool, and I have been left to myself in this wretched state. For many weeks I have lost the power of fixing my attention. The most overwhelming somnolency seizes me. Under the influence of these circumstances, together with the diminished hope of dissolution, which formerly cheered me, I have lost all energy. One thing, however, consoles me: my still being in Life seems to be likely to be beneficial to my Son. He is extremely attached to me, and my last advice will ever be impressed upon his Soul. If I do not live many months, I shall leave him a handsome sum, out of the £300 received from the Queen. . . . .

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Friday, Aug. 3rd.

This miserable state of existence lowers my spirits daily. To pass the night in moaning and drinking laudanum as the only means of getting a little repose; to rise up, and be wheeled to the spot where I must remain fixed till the hour of going to bed, unable to pursue any mental object, and hardly awake enough for writing a Letter—thus to have lived month after month, and yet to see no end at hand, is extremely trying and distressing. Of its being arranged in Wisdom I have no doubt; but

pain and anguish must be felt, however willingly you submit. Socrates so feared the moral evils of Disease, that the certainty of escaping those of extreme old age by the legal Murder of which the Athenians were about to be guilty against him, was one of the main supports he had against the Terrors of Death. How would Socrates have stood the trial of severe Illness (he never in his life was even indisposed) is a problem of great curiosity, but which we have not the means to solve. Socrates, an Invalid, or Valetudinarian, would have been quite another individual. As far as we know the personal qualities of Jesus of Nazareth, the same may be probably asserted. A sickly man may be an amiable and interesting person, but he cannot be extensively useful.

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Sunday, Aug. 5th.

God cannot have formed his intellectual creatures to break like bubbles, and be no more. To die with implicit trust in Him, but without drawing absurd Pictures of a future life, is the only rational conduct of which the subject admits.

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Monday, Aug. 6th.

"Were this world our only sphere of action, we might be depressed at the thought of our unfinished plans, and of going, before half our work was done.

But the very power which grasps at so much more than we can accomplish, is prophetic of a higher life." *Dr. Channing, in a Letter received this day.*

This is, indeed, one of the most powerful arguments in favour of the Immortality of the Soul. If any one who possesses even a slight power of self-observation, will turn candidly within himself, and try to obtain a collective view of what he calls his Soul, he will soon be convinced that the Spirit which dwells in him cannot be the effect of a mere combination of organic phenomena. It is, on the contrary, the most *real*, and, using the word in a truly philosophical sense, the most *substantial* thing, with which we are acquainted: it is the ultimate and most firm foundation for our belief in God. Our Soul is not a growth of our external or material Frame: on the contrary, it is the foundation of our Being. But the Soul contains in itself the deepest mysteries of the Universe: the more we examine it, the greater is our perplexity in regard to its Personality, and even to its Unity. Observe the tendency of self-observers to divide it into two—a higher and an inferior Soul. This is the great Problem of true philosophy—namely, the separation of the superior and inferior Faculties, the fixing the seat of Personality. Were this settled, were it shown, for instance, that Personality consists in the Limitation, the shaping of the inferior Soul by the circumstances or each person's condition in this life, I believe that all the difficulties against the Immor-

tality of the Soul would vanish. They arise, in my opinion, from making the word *soul* express a multitude of things, which cannot be reduced to one Predicament. This is, however, the effect of the Imagination—that treacherous Faculty to which men surrender themselves, in all subjects connected with religion. P. P., Clerk of the Parish, must be the identical Individual throughout Eternity: the same are every one of his Neighbour's wishes; against which wishes there are difficulties which every reflecting man must find insuperable.

"Alas! You will take away our Personality." And who will mourn for the loss? Some distressed *Impersonal.* "But what becomes of all the system of Rewards and Punishments?" It will surely exist as long as man is upon the face of the Earth. But here we are gliding again into the Political Religion —the Instrument which employs Man's hopes and fears, in order to shape him to some system of government, which must, under all modifications, exclude both violence and profligacy. Let men know themselves—let them be well *educated* from their infancy, and they will find Heaven in doing their Duty,—and Hell, in defying it.

> "Oderunt peccare boni, virtutis amore;
> Tu nihil admittes in te, formidine pœnæ."

The former should be the Aim of all Education; for the latter no sensible man would give a straw.

Aug. 7th.

"What comforts can such Doctrines give in the seasons of Affliction, and on the approach of Death?"

This observation works with immense power upon most minds; but what does it amount to? Are Doctrines true in proportion to their power of soothing a certain description of persons? Then the imaginative Religions of the East must be true: the Koran must be true. If Comfort is the guage and measure of Truth, who is a more enviable being than the sincere Mahometan? His practical Fatalism gives him Resignation; he derives a lively Hope of future happiness—a clear, definite state of happiness —from the performance of certain external duties. Let those who look for comfort in Doctrines, embrace those of the Koran. Why will they not?—Because the Koran is not a true revelation. This is a most sensible Answer. Why, then, do the same people employ the Topic of *comfort*, for the purpose of getting proselytes to their religious system?

For my own part, I declare that I never derived any *comfort* from the doctrines of the Atonement, and their collateral branches; but that at present my mind is in a most satisfactory state in regard to religious questions.

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Aug. 8th.

No energy whatever to write.

Thursday, August 9th.

It is indeed with difficulty that I resist the utmost dejection of spirits. Nor is there anything surprising in this, considering the long time that I have continued pinned down to this chair, and generally even without the power of amusing myself with reading. I think, however, I have rather improved in patience. I am in hopes that on my approaching the End, unless I have the misfortune of dying in great pain, I shall derive mental strength from the sure prospect of the great change. I conceive there is something very dignified in a human being awaiting his Dissolution with firmness. Painful as Death frequently is from the nature of some of the diseases that inflict it, the transition from this to an unknown state of existence has something ennobling in it. May God grant me the great blessing of an Euthanasia.

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Aug. 10th.

In Mill's excellent article on Bentham (London and Westminster Review for this month), there are some very acute observations on the two kinds of Talent—the Constructive and the Destructive. [By the bye, I do not recollect to have seen this Nomenclature anywhere, before I proposed it with an apology, in an article on the state of Education in Spain, for which I was applied to, through Dr. Whately, by the Editor of the Journal of Education. There are two articles upon that subject in that

Journal. Mine is the first; with the other I disclaim all connection.] It appears to me, that in treating of this subject, it is always taken for granted that in all matters there is a possibility of being *Constructive*; —that every Error has a corresponding Truth, which it is the duty of him who upsets the Error to establish, in the place of the Delusion which has been dispelled. This, however, appears to me an unwarrantable and mischievous assumption. Suppose a man discovers the absurdity of a certain system of religious ceremonies: is he to be called upon to give us another? How often, in the destructive process, it is seen that the supposition of partial error, on which it was begun, is totally groundless, and that the only Remedy in the case is total Abolition! Now, to undertake inquiries of this kind, under the impression that whatever error we destroy will leave a chasm which it is our duty to fill up, must shackle our faculties, and give us a wrong bias throughout the whole examination. This is what has happened to the Reformation. It was supposed, and it is still firmly believed, that the basis of Christianity is some positive Authority; and every Reformer who has been successful in opening the eyes of a certain number of people to the existence of some hitherto unobserved Error, has invariably employed himself in the *constructive* attempt of establishing the supposed divine Authority which his destructive process has shaken. This is the cause of our making no Progress—that even the Unitarians are at a stand,

and do not know what course to take. Let them at once perceive, that in this case the whole process must be destructive, that nothing should be substituted in the place of an arbitrary system: and then, but not before, will true religious Liberty be established.

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August 11th.

The Misses Yates, whose kindness to me has been very marked, and most delicately expressed, by a constant attention to every little thing that could cheer my sinking spirits—such as beautiful flowers, and some choice vegetables from their kitchen-garden—being on the point of setting out for Italy, Constantinople and Greece, requested me to write a few lines in their Album. I did so this morning, though much against my inclination, being convinced that even a man of the most ready wit, must be dull when he undertakes this kind of performance. I pointed out part of the moral duties of Travellers.

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August 13th, 1838.

An English Sunday is the very emblem of Dulness: but it is difficult to conceive its depressing effects on a solitary sufferer like myself. This religion of means converted into ends, is the occasion of great mischief everywhere.

14th.

This was a day of much suffering, and little thought. *Usquequo, Domine?*

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15th.

Those that *praise* cheerfulness in severe illness can have no notion of what it is to be ill. My experience is unfortunately very long, and if there is earnestness and honesty in man, I may be believed when I assert that my efforts to overcome the sinking of the spirits are strong and incessant. But alas! for the cheerfulness which is to be obtained by *Effort*, unsupported by some alleviation of pain and misery. Such efforts are necessary; they are a Duty, and, as such, I take great care not to neglect them; but to be *cheerful*, to be in high jocular spirits, when there is not any part of the body exempt from actual pain, when every function of life is a torture, when eating is nausea, sleep agony, and even sitting in a luxurious chair may be compared to being on the rack—to ask for cheerfulness when all power of locomotion has been taken away, and the legs are felt to be unorganised burdens, performing no office but that of vehicles of pain,—denotes a thoughtlessness which the sufferer feels as one of his greatest trials. How dreadfully have I smarted under the *cheering* unfeelingness of people who enjoy habitual health!

21st.

The hairdresser brought me a young Canary-bird as a Present.*

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*From Dr. Channing.*

August 24th, 1838.

My dear Sir,

I received, a few days ago, your last letter, written with a trembling hand, and whilst I was touched and gratified by this proof of your regard, I could not but regret, that I had subjected you to so exhausting a labour. You must console yourself, by thinking that you did good. I trust I shall be the better for this testimony to your principles, this breathing of your spirit, this expression of calm reliance on God's perpetual inspiration and fatherly love. I hope it is not to be the last testimony. Should Providence renew in any measure your strength, you must give me a few lines, for you have not many friends more interested in you than myself. The conflicts of a mind, seeking, struggling for truth amidst peculiar obstructions, and sacrificing to it, not merely outward good, but friendship, confidence, love—are to me more affecting than all outward warfare. I trust you have received my late letter, written on hearing of your great debility, in which I begged you to forget, or not to think of answering the preceding one. That will show you how little importance I attached to my criticisms on your communication to Mr. Ripley. I sometimes think of visiting England, and one of the great pleasures I have promised myself has been that of seeing you; but a higher will disposes of us, and who would reverse it? I thank God

[* This bird was ever after his constant companion. Placed on his table, every morning, in an open cage, Dickey fluttered about him, and broke his solitude with the sight of life and enjoyment. It died in the same hour that he died. We need not add that this fact is mentioned here only as a curious coincidence.]

that He continues to you, amidst your trials, the strength of your faculties. So long as we can think clearly, we can carry on the great work of life—we can turn suffering to a glorious account—we can gather from triumphs over the body a new consciousness of the Divinity of the spirit. I have sometimes thought that my gratitude to God was never more lively than in illness; and how many under this trial have had a new revelation of his presence. May He grant you these consolations. You feel, undoubtedly, as we all do on approaching our end here, as if you might have done more for the great cause to which your life has been devoted. To a friend of his race, who looks round on the amount of guilt and error in the world, how little he seems to have achieved! But let us thank God, if in any thing we have served our brethren; and may we not say, in the disproportion of our desires to our doings, that we are destined to a higher efficiency,—to a world, where our powers, now so imprisoned, will expand freely and joyfully. But I will not weary with reflections with which you are so familiar. I commend you affectionately to God, the never-failing fountain of light, truth, peace, love, and blessedness.

Very truly and respectfully your friend,

W. E. CHANNING.

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25th.

My misery during the intervening days has been so great, that I do not say to think, but to *live*, was torment. I feel a little better this morning. How long the amendment will last it is impossible to tell. I will certainly exert myself as much as a determined Will can enable me, to oppose this horrible disease. It must not be supposed, however, that my distress

appears in the shape of Thought,—whether of doubt, of anticipation of evil, or anything of this kind. If any thought contributes to it, it is that of the probable prolongation of my life: so far indeed am I from suffering in consequence of fear of any kind. I am sure that the Bigots will not believe this assertion, but will insist upon some intimate connection between my physical distress, and what they will call my Unbelief; but I positively tell them, they are completely mistaken.

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Wednesday, August 29th.

This deep internal weakness prevents all connected exertion of thought. Before I take up the pen, perhaps feeling a certain degree of relief from pain, I think I shall be able to write something worth preserving; but when I come to the point, all mental vigour fails me. It would give me great satisfaction to write the long intended letter to the Unitarians, but I fear I shall never accomplish it. My greatest enemy is this unconquerable drowsiness. It seized me a moment ago, and made the pen run over the paper without direction. Patience!

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Saturday, September 1st.

I continue under the same mental inactivity. Thoughts leading to useful observations occur to me, but I fall asleep as soon as I attempt to develop them.

But I can read, with moderate attention, even works which demand some exertion of the thinking faculties.

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Mr. Thom in the morning. I read to him part of an admirable Extract from Jouffroy in the Miscellany published at Boston by Ripley. The passage made me ashamed of my weakness: I determined to exert myself to the utmost against the dejection of disease.

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Monday, September 10th.

How can I convey in words the utter misery into which I am sinking deeper every day. Nothing but a firm persuasion that self-destruction would be criminal in me prevents my putting it into execution. But my will is fixed: I am determined not to do wrong. In this horrible distress I still wish to conform to the will of God; but it seems to me impossible to continue much longer in this state, preserving my Reason. I have scarcely any power of self-government against this despondency.

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Sept. 30th.

Mrs. Lawrence to leave some flowers. Rather better, though the nights are very bad.

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October 16th.

In copying my Sonnet on Night and Death for a friend, I have made some corrections. It is now as follows:—

Mysterious Night! when our first Parent knew
Thee, from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely Frame,
This glorious canopy of Light and Blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting Flame,
Hesperus with the Host of Heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened in Man's view.
Who could have thought such Darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless Orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

J. B W.

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Tuesday, Oct. 16th, 1838.

In a letter received this morning, Ferdinand White tells me that he expects to be here on Thursday next.

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18th.

Ferdinand White arrived at 10 A. M.

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19th.

Talked a great deal without much increase of suffering. The excitement produced by the presence of my son is certainly beneficial.

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20th.

In better spirits, though very weak in the morning.

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22nd.

Began reading Italian with Ferdinand.

*Letter to Mrs. ——.*

Oct. 23rd, 1838.

My dear ——,

My heart is not so narrow as not to be able to embrace more than one object of parental love. Both you and your husband keep your old places, or rather I should say become identified with that son of mine whom you seem so inclined to treat as a brother. It is to me a very great pleasure when I see Ferdinand either going out with your husband, or taking his hat to go to see you.

If I understand you right, I believe I shall have complied with your request when I put your name on a very common edition of Shakspeare in Ten little volumes, which I have used for probably about five-and-twenty years, scribbling Notes upon some of the Plays even in the middle of the night, in seasons when I have been distressed for want of sleep. Is this what you wish for? Tell me if I am mistaken.

It is surprising how I have talked for the last five days; yet, in spite of a kind of nervous fever, which keeps me in a perpetual agitation, and deprives me of sleep at night, I am most *perversely* better. Nevertheless, I am glad I have lived to see Ferdinand—the object of my life's cares and exertions.

Yours, my dear ——,
Ever affectionately,
J. Blanco White.

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Nov. 8th.

How deep may be the sorrows of a guiltless heart! But how easily they are prevented from causing utter Distress when Innocence and Benevolence unite to tend the wounds!

21st.

Finished a trifling Article for Mr. Thom's Review.

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25th.

A Letter received by Ferdinand from L. Moore, containing General Anderson's opinion that he should express to the Commander-in-Chief his readiness to return to India immediately, if wanted, induced me to advise him to proceed to London without delay, and present himself at the Horse Guards.

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*Letter to Lord Holland.*

Liverpool, Nov. 25, 1838.

My dear Lord Holland,

I have two reasons for taking the liberty of introducing to you my son Lieut. and Adjutant Ferdinand White, of the 40th Regiment, who is come from Bombay on leave of absence, after a residence of 12 years both at Sydney, in N. S. Wales, and in that Presidency. The first of my reasons is, that he wishes to thank Lady Holland for an introduction to Lord Clare, when he was Governor of Bombay. Lord Clare behaved with great politeness to Lieut. White. The second reason is, that he will be able to give you an account of my present state, much more accurate indeed than any description I might attempt to send by Letter. I trust you will find these reasons sufficient to acquit me of intrusion.

I felt very much obliged to you for your very kind answer to my excellent friend, the Rev. J. H. Thom, of this town. I exert myself as much as possible to write a few trifling

Articles for his Periodical. The Editor has no object whatever in that Publication, but the propagation of a liberal spirit upon all subjects.

I am extremely happy to hear that both you and Lady Holland have benefitted by your visit to Paris.

With kindest regards to all,

I am, my dear Lord Holland,

Yours ever gratefully,

J. Blanco White.

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Nov. 26th.

[Ferdinand left me for London. Without any diminution of the dropsical symptoms, and the same inability to stand on my legs, yet I feel much better.]

Though I continue in respect to the locked knee-joints and swellings in various parts of the body, without any amendment, my spirits are, at times, much better, and this morning I feel a certain degree of pleasure in mental activity.

I have been reading a chapter in my favourite Marcus Antoninus, § 4, B. III. What a sublime view is there expressed of the Man who regulates his whole Being according to the Spirit who dwells in us! There is nothing above it in St. Paul, though the notions, and even some of the expressions, denote identity of origin. One thing is clear, however, to those who examine both writers impartially—that the Stoic Philosophy is the *source* of the Pauline philosophical fragments. The proof of this is, on

the one hand, the completeness of the Philosopher's instructions; and on the other, the incompleteness, exaggeration, and rough fragmentary character of the maxims and observations of the Apostle.

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Dec. 3rd.

Very ill. I am deriving great relief from the drowsiness which attacks me constantly, by playing on the Flute. This morning I found myself unable to draw a note, owing to the swelling of my face and lips.

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8th.

Ferdinand White returned in the Evening.

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9th.

Relieved by Ferdinand's company.

## CHAPTER IX.

### EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

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1839.—Ætat. 64.

January 1st, 1839.

The year which expired yesterday has been one of incessant suffering to me. I have no better prospect for that which begins this day. In spite, however, of my misery, I have not been absolutely idle. I have renewed and improved my acquaintance with the Italian Language, and Italian Literature. I have read some important works. I have made a very considerable effort to complete my knowledge of German. But with the exception of a slight Article on Huber's *Skizzen von Spanien,* for Mr. Thom's Christian Teacher, all my attempts to write have failed. My mental vigour is greatly reduced. It is now more than six months since I stood on my legs. This absolute confinement to an arm chair exhausts my spirits. My existence is mere pain, languor, and hopeless desire of Death.

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I have for some days past been reading Schiller's Plays. Italian and Music with Ferdinand.

12th.

Daily reading Italian, Carlyle (French Revolution), and Music with Ferdinand.

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14th.

A Letter from the Provost of Oriel.

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Feb. 7th.

Reading, daily, Guingené and Tasso, with Leo, and Marcus Antoninus.

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March 3rd.

Anniversary of my arrival in England.

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March 10th, Sunday.

As dull as any Sabbatarian could wish.

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19th.

Very ill.—Began correcting a printed copy of "Heresy and Orthodoxy," for a second edition.

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22nd.

Alas! Ferdinand left me this morning for London. Shall I see him again? It I do, how short will that last meeting be! But *θαρρῶ τῷ διοικοῦντι.*

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April 2nd.

Sent the copy for the second edition of "Heresy and Orthodoxy" to Mr. Thom.

9th.

Note Book.*—I have neglected this Book for a long time. The chief cause of this has been the presence of my son, whose company has had more interest for me than any thoughts of my own. He has been away three weeks, and it is uncertain how long I may have him again with me; or even whether I may see him at all—though it is probable I shall. But, at all events, I shall resume my practice of writing down any of my thoughts that may seem worth while to remember. Most of them are most melancholy forebodings, which I cannot entirely dispel, but am obliged to let them pass like dark clouds over my mind.

The two following notes had been written down in the Appendix to the Students' Journal. The thoughts therein expressed occurred to me early in the morning of two preceding days, during the hour and a half which I pass sitting on the edge of my bed, before I am wheeled into my dressing-room. They are both entered under one date, April 7th.

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God would not employ human language to say what, according to his laws, human language cannot express. This appears to me an unanswerable objection to the doctrines of the Trinity. But I am

[* The preceding extracts in this chapter were taken from occasional entries in a small journal.]

sure that few will understand it, for the simple reason that there are few among us who know any thing about the philosophy of language.

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Geometrical figures are not *symbols* of the thing upon which we reason by their means; they are the thing itself—Space. Their imperfection arises from the *limits* we employ, which, being also space, cannot properly limit.

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17th.

A letter from Ferdinand, acquainting me with the intention of the Commander-in-Chief, to appoint him to command some soldiers going next June to Bombay.

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20th.

Employed the morning in writing a good-natured squib, which amused me.*

[* To show all sides of his mind, we give such passages of this clever piece of humour, as are not directly personal.]

UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY.

*To the Editor of the Liverpool Albion.*

SIR,—I am an old practitioner of medicine, who have the misfortune of being established on so healthy a spot of the principality of Wales, that I hardly have anything to do in the way of my profession. The people among whom I live are so obstinately—I might say, rudely—well, that, for a time, I could not help taking their vivacious looks as a personal insult. But habit has reconciled me to this impudence of health, and I do no longer complain of their total disregard of my

29th.

Though groaning at every breath, I still feel strongly moved to write a Review of the Unitarian Controversy, or rather the Unitarian *Quarrel*, which is going on in this town. That it is not a rational

interests. I have, however, a little pittance of my own, and, being naturally *contentus parvo*, i. e. not ambitious, my time is entirely devoted to the establishment and development of a medical system of my own. Having very, very few near me who want my advice, I have, for some time, been in the practice of making out medical cases for myself, entirely for the love of science; for I seldom trouble the patients with my opinion, and never, of course, either was offered, or accepted, a fee. But, "How," you will ask, "do you proceed? Do you procure a view of the persons for whose health you are so disinterestedly concerned?" No, my dear sir, not at all; for, besides that I could not afford to travel at my own cost, I should fear to be very uncivilly sent about my business when I had fully stated the object of my errand. Now, Mr. Editor, I beg your particular attention, for I am about to lay open the delicate and, I might say, ethereal principle of my system.

You know how many attempts have been made to discover the internal state of the microcosm, man: by the lines of the hand, cheiromancy; by the features, physiognomy; and, lastly, by the bumps and dimensions of his head, phrenology. Nor have speculatists been wanting who wished to discover the state and peculiar structure of the mind, through the shape of individual handwriting. I have gone deeper into the mystery of man, and am, at length, in possession of a key which opens at once the moral and physical state of *certain* individuals to my observant eyes. The moral part of the discovery, however, I leave to the clerical profession, reserving to myself that which properly belongs to the science of medicine. My guides (to come at once to the discovery) are the literary compositions of the various patients who, in absolute ignorance of their internal diseases, betray them completely through their writings. This science I have named BIBLIOPATHOLOGY. At present, there is but one adept of this miraculous science, that is, your humble servant, myself; but I am ready to receive pupils, and if, by means of your valuable paper ——. However, I will say no more, lest you should charge me for an advertisement. To return to my method: I procure as many of the

inquiry, is not the fault of the able men who have been assailed by the conceit of the Orthodox. These men fell upon my friends *pugnis et unguibus*, and being thus attacked they could not but defend themselves, in the old way of quarrelling controversy.

publications of living authors as my scanty means and the kindness of my friends allow me. I study these productions *medically*, and such is the efficacy of my scientific principle, that, if there is any morbid tendency in the author, I can instantly discover it. Oh, sir! how many a young poet and poetess have I cautioned,—alas! in vain,—against an approaching consumption! How many cases of inanition have I predicted! How many members of parliament (for I can form my diagnosis from their speeches) might secure themselves from the various dangers of epilepsy, water in the head, and the writhings of the cholic, if they would believe my prognosis of their cases!

But the largest field for my science I have always found among the clergy. There is not, my good sir, an Episcopal charge but discloses to me a most wretched state of the internal system. As in Parliament most of the indications are spasmodic, those of the clergy are mostly biliary. There is much plethora among them, with its natural consequences of somnolency, constipation, &c. &c. But of bile! The true *atra bilis*, which the ancients used to send to *Anticyra*, as we do to Cheltenham, I frequently find the most appalling symptoms.

One of these cases has lately occupied my attention, which, as the patient (patient, of course, without his being conscious of it) lives in or very near your town, I have resolved to state to you at full length, that you may be good enough to make inquiries, and compare actual realities with my scientific conjectures, which, as you will easily believe, are more than realities to myself.

You are well aware that theological controversy is raging in your town of Liverpool. A theological controversy! Oh! if medicine had generally been carried to the acme of perfection to which I have brought it, that name would be more formidable than the influenza three years ago. Well, then, I have attentively examined the internal state of various individuals, as it is deducible from their printed productions on this occasion. I will not give you all my observations, for fear of tiring you; but I must beg your particular attention to the case of the Rev. Mr. ——, as clearly indicated in a letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. ——. I never met with a more dangerous superabundance

But the Unitarians, if obliged to defend themselves in detail, concerning propositions involved in the most violent prejudices of the mass of the people, are placed under great disadvantages. I am convinced that it is not necessary to disprove the theory of Inspiration, in order to show that the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth was no article of the primitive Christianity. But as long as every phrase of the Bible shall be regarded as a divine oracle, no right principles of interpretation can be applied, with any effect, upon the popular Mind. Here is this text of Paul, they will say; he calls Christ, God over all, blessed for ever. The question appears at once settled; for though it is evident that, all circumstances of the case being considered as sound interpretation demands, that passage must be acknowledged to have been tampered with by the *Church*, whatever the Manuscripts may

of bile—acrid, corrosive, threatening, in my opinion, a *spontaneous combustion* of the patient. I should not be surprised, indeed, if, one of these mornings, there should be found, in the bed of the reverend gentlemen, a handful of *caput mortuum*—some alkalies, perhaps, the rest of the individual having been converted, with a loud detonation, into what the Germans, very appropriately, call SOUR gas.

I must, however, inform you of another delicate part of my method, which I have particularly applied in the case of Mr. —— It is this: out of the ancient and modern satirists I have chosen some strikingly depicted characters to guide me in such medical investigations. Now, when I find, in a recently-published book or pamphlet, that the author might have sat to the satirical painter for one or other of his remarkable pictures, I directly infer a morbid state in the living writer, else how could a man, with a sound constitution, be so extremely like an exaggerated drawing, perhaps a caricature? Let us apply this rule to Mr. ——.

exhibit, it is impossible for any mind under the superstitious notion of Inspiration, to allow itself the necessary freedom to perceive anything in the case, but that *the words are there*. The question of Inspiration is the basis of all theology; till it is thoroughly examined, and the negative proof against it made as clear as by its nature it can be, all Controversy is a mere Blind Man's Buff play.

The absurdity of most of the orthodox Sermons in this Controversy is inconceivable. Mr. M'Neil's is truly contemptible: Mr. Stewart's is pitiful: Mr. Byrth's is odious. Men more unprepared for any philosophical inquiry than these Orthodox champions, it is impossible to conceive. I would not attempt to convince *them;* but I could assist many an honest thinking person, in delivering themselves from the deadening influence of these Priests.

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April 30th.

Very unwell. Went to bed very early: but saw Ferdinand when he arrived.

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May 4th, 1839.

"PLAN (*of a Lexicon*).

"The above is an Alphabetical Arrangement (according to Schmid) of every word in the *Greek* New Testament. Immediately after each *Greek* word follows the series of *passages* in which it occurs:

these are given in quotations from the authorised *English* translation. Throughout each series, *italic* letters are used to mark the word or words which correspond to the Greek word under consideration. The citations are sufficiently full to enable any one moderately acquainted with the English Testament to recall the context. The OBJECT of the work is to endeavour to lead the mind to deduce 'its meaning and definition of words' from *the use made of them by the* HOLY GHOST.*—By *Bagster*."

The English are certainly a practical people; give them the most aerial thought in the shape of a metaphor, and, if it answers their purpose, they will hammer it into the solidity of a rock. The theory of Bible-Inspiration has reached its utmost limits of materiality. Here we have a Lexicon composed by the Holy Ghost. What an impious man must that be that will not learn Greek from it! All uncertainty is now removed, for we may know the "meaning and definition of words from *the use made of them by the* HOLY GHOST." Who shall now venture to call the Hellenistic Greek a poor and rude dialect, or accuse St. John of bad Grammar! Away with your Thucydides, Demosthenes, Plato! Your Greek has no divine Sanction!

[* The printing of the original advertisement is exactly copied.]

May 5th, 1839.

My reading before the return of Ferdinand from London has been, Strauss' Leben Jesu, nearly through a second time: a little Hebrew daily, and a few sentences of M. Aurelius, as a subject of meditation: and Homer,—besides the Periodicals. After Ferdinand's return, we read some Italian and Latin.

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19th.

Ferdinand left me for Dublin, to visit his brother officer, Captain Coddrington.

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25th.

I finished yesterday a slight reading of a very able statement of the various systems of German Philosophy from Kant to Hegel. It is entitled, *Historische Entwickelung der speculativen Philosophie von Kant bis Hegel von Heinrich Moritz Chalybäus.* Dresden. 1837. 8vo. I have said that I gave it a slight reading, because I omitted one or two intricate passages, requiring more attention than I can in my present state bestow upon any subject. I have read however this work with great interest, because it is excellently written, and in a more luminous style than such works generally display. The introduction, which breathes a generous spirit of philosophical freedom, put me in high spirits; but the conclusion dashed them down in a most painful manner. One by one

all the systems which men of the highest talents, had constructed with infinite labour, came to split upon the rock of *religion.* The multitude, with their governors and their *priests,* are shocked,—and the most accurate series of deductions must consequently be discarded, as visionary. There is no principle whatever in the human mind from which an *extramundane* God can be inferred to exist: not one *philosophical* ground upon which the immortality of Mr. A. and Mrs. B. can be established. Away then with philosophy: away with its God; he cannot "walk in a garden in the cool of the evening," or be applied to with petitions for health, or perhaps fine weather to cross to Calais. The spectre of Pantheism stands in the way of all true Philosophy; all good people are afraid of Pantheism; but who does show the least uneasiness about *Idolatry,*—that Idolatry of the Imagination which is the basis of all that is called Christianity? Can this tyranny continue long? Shall ignorance and shallowness obstruct the way of Knowledge for ever? Impossible. But I who have lived, and am dying, in pain and anguish for the love of truth, shall not see the day of intellectual freedom. Happy, at least, if I have been one to fill up the ditch of the fortress of superstition! "Happy shall they be who shall dash the last religious errors against a stone."

May 26th.

I am still irresistibly drawing up plans for works against religious error, though, at the same time, I am oppressed with a perpetual sense of misery. Dr. Sutherland has been reading the Second Travels, and speaks highly of that work. I am confident that those two small volumes contain an unanswerable argument against that monstrous πρῶτον ψεῦδος—a CHURCH; only that I never expand my reasons, and few readers will undertake that work for themselves. But this is the original character of my mind, which I cannot alter. The principal strength of my work consists in historical facts applied to the theory of Orthodoxy. Could not those facts be developed into a sketch of the history of Christian belief during the three first centuries? It is enough to show the absolute want of historical foundations for the present Christianity, to exhibit the total darkness in which theoretical Christianity is lost during the latter part of the first, and a great portion of the second century; to prove the chasm of a hundred years which separate all Christian documents from Christ, and his immediate disciples. I think if I had but middling health, I could give a sound, yet popular view of this fact. But what can I do?

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June 15th.

Took my last leave of Ferdinand, and felt as if my heart was breaking.

*To J——.*

Liverpool, June 18th, 1839.

Your letter is this instant arrived. It contains the only words of comfort I have yet received in my *deep* affliction. I will not conceal that this separation has afflicted me more than any other event in my life. My philosophy is only a guide to me; but it has not steeled my heart against pain. It has taught me to advise Ferdinand to return to India, because I thought it the best thing in his circumstances; it has enabled me to spare him pain by concealing my own; but as I shook him by the hand on Saturday evening, knowing that I should, in all probability, never see him again, I could hardly contain my anguish within my bosom. Fortunately I was going to bed, where I could give way to my sorrow. I say that *yours* are the first words of consolation I have heard; not a soul has been here since Ferdinand left me. I feel, indeed, as Ulysses' dog on the Dunghill: but I endeavour to take my share of misery day by day, and leave the future to develop itself. You are reading Don Quixote again? Had I not been broken down by disease during the best part of my life, I would have attempted a correction of the first English translation—I forget the name of the translator—which is now very scarce. My wish was to give to the style an air of antiquity, corresponding to that of Cervantes himself. In the serious passages, Sir Philip Sidney's style in the Arcadia would answer admirably; in the comic, Shakspeare ought to be the model. A life of Cervantes was the last thing of this kind I had in contemplation; but the want of books dissuaded me from undertaking the task. I ought to have been near the British Museum.

June 26th, 1839.

In no matter whatever, needs a man be reminded of what *he believes,* except in religion. What a man believes he knows, and what he knows he believes. Why should the priesthood come to us with an inventory of what we believe?—The priesthood do not care about our belief; what they want is our assent; so they make out a list of what we have to assent to, if we are to avoid the consequences of their indignation. The old Romish priesthood do not conceal this: according to them, any one who says, "I believe whatever the Mother Church believes," has saving Faith. The Protestant Churches desire to disguise their wishes, which are the same as those of Rome, and mince the matter. Yet there never was, nor ever will be, a Priesthood guiltless of the design to take all other men's minds into their keeping.

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28th.

Reading from one o'clock till a quarter to eight in the morning, in order to escape from the misery of drowsiness without the possibility of falling asleep.

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*To Dr. Channing.*

Liverpool, June 30th, 1839.

My dear Sir,

I would have written to you long ago, if the miserable state in which I still continue did not generally deprive me

of that power of attention, without which we cannot collect our thoughts. It is true that my life is not in immediate danger; the constant fever has left me, and the dropsy is much less; but I do not enjoy a single hour of rest from distress and pain. It is now more than a year since I last stood on my feet. I have totally lost the use of my knee-joints, and am consequently compelled to sit the whole day, and to lie on my back the whole night. I am wheeled in a chair from my bedroom to my study, and taken to bed early in the same manner. It is only by means of my hands that I can shift myself from the chair to the bed. There is no prospect whatever of relief: death alone can release me from this thraldom. But as you observe in your admirable Letter on Slavery, (the passage came home to my feelings,) this total want of liberty comes from a source which the mind blesses and loves, whether it sends pain or enjoyment. Were it *man* that kept me even in much slighter confinement, I do not know how I could stand the temptation to self destruction.

I sincerely congratulate you on the publication of that Letter. You have written it under the inspiration of Truth and Humanity. You have dragged the Monster from its fastnesses, you have exposed its hideousness to the world. I cannot imagine a fallacy, either of intellect or feeling, which you have not thoroughly answered.

I wish I could agree with you in the same unqualified manner upon the subject of War. I do not doubt for a moment that War is one of the great evils which are allowed to fall upon mankind; but I cannot class it with the *greatest* of those evils: I conceive that it has a more abundant compensation of good than pestilence and famine. Have you read Colonel Napier's History of the Peninsular War? It contains the most appalling pictures of destruction that I ever met in any historical book. But out of the very horrors which make the imagination recoil, there breaks out a moral light, a grandeur of character which could not be

produced under any other circumstances. In our modern wars, the most perfect contempt of death is very frequently joined with the repose of the evil passions. It is only under the irritation of peculiar antipathies (such as existed between the French and the Spaniards) that the regular, well-trained soldier acts under the ferocious impulses of hatred and offended *personal* pride. Between the English and the French there existed, during the last war, a generous feeling, of which you will find most noble instances in the above-mentioned work. I must add, that I have found some of the most admirable characters among soldiers. Colonel Napier himself might be mentioned as a remarkable instance. I do not mean to recommend war—God forbid it! but considering that its abolition will be impracticable for a long time, I wish rather to see benevolence employed in suggesting the means of allaying the evils of that scourge, than in directly opposing it. A high discipline, (which is in itself a certain kind of education,) the diffusion of knowledge among the officers, and a general tone of society which will demand the union of humanity and courage in those who are to be considered *men of honour*,—such appear to me to be the true remedies, at this period of society, against the unredeemed evils of war.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with sincere respect and affection,

Your friend,

J. Blanco White.

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July 6th, 1839.

Exceedingly unwell, with violent convulsions, till about six in the morning. It is not the severity, but the length of this trial that oppresses me.

July 8th, 1839.

A very instructive, and perhaps interesting book might be written under the title, *The Secret Diary of a Spanish Inquisitor*, or *religious aberrations.*

Imagine a sincere Roman Catholic priest, regularly brought up, and otherwise refined, who at the age of thirty is appointed Inquisitor. He is full of zeal, but has a human heart: he has fully imbibed the prejudices of his education, but his understanding is clear, his reason unperverted, and he loves truth. Prisoners are gradually brought before him, whom he takes a particular pleasure to examine *in private.* A *Protestant* discusses his tenets with him, especially respecting *authority.* The Inquisitor finds many of the prisoner's observations against Rome very weighty, but the *constructive* part of Protestantism very defective. A total sceptic;—the Inquisitor is struck with many difficulties against dogmatic religion, but total scepticism, or rather total denial of a religious principle, quite groundless. Lastly, a true *Theist*; the Inquisitor is caught.—His state of mind under such circumstances. A beautiful Jewish girl, in the prisons of the Inquisition. The Inquisitor in love—his dangers. He escapes with the girl, loses her, and becomes a victim to what is falsely called *Christianity.*

11th.

My sixty-fourth Birth-day: to what wretchedness was I appointed at my birth! There is an infinite Wisdom to which I submit.

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Miss —— and Miss —— came to see me. This visit increased my sufferings. Most people do not understand real kindness.

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19th.

I am at that stage of my martyrdom when the flame, which has not been able to extinguish life by suffocation, subsides, and the burning coals melt the limbs.

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21st.

I have lately read Keightley's Greek and Roman Mythology. It is a well-written book, clever, but rather superficial. The author's ready and contemptuous rejection of the Symbolical System of Creuzer is the effect, I conceive, of his disinclination to write any thing but a book for the London market.

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22nd.

The unchangeable character of Ecclesiastical persecution:—

Multos invenias, quos si interroges, in quibus

libris aut in quibus locis (Origenis) dicta sint hæc, quæ arguunt, confitentur, se quidem nescire ea, de quibus affirmant, nec legisse unquam, audisse autem alios dicentes.—The very same thing happened when Dr. Hampden was condemned at Oxford. The Latin passage is from the Preface of an Apology for Origen, written by the Martyr Pamphilus, a Priest of Cæsarea (A.D. 309), in five books, to which Eusebius added one. Nothing but the first book, in Rufinus' Translation, is in existence.

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23rd.

Letter from Ferdinand, on board the ship "Strabane," Gravesend. He was to sail that afternoon. He commands 129 men and four young officers,—the men very young recruits—and no old commissioned officers.

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August 21st, 1839.

Reading early in the morning in the second volume of Michelet's admirable History of France, I found a passage on Flanders, which he calls *une Lombardie prosaïque*, adding in a Note—Vous y retrouvez la prédilection pour le cygne, qui, selon Virgile, était l'ornement du Mincius et des autres fleuves de Lombardie. Dès l'entrée de l'ancienne Belgique, Amiens, la petite Venise, comme l'appelait Louis

XIV. nourissait sur la Somme les cygnes du roi. En Flandre, une foule d'auberges ont pour enseigne le cygne.—p. 272. I added in pencil:—

The swan is to me the poetry of birds. The last swan that has delighted my eyes was, and probably is still, at Redesdale, (the country place of the present Archbishop of Dublin,) the place of my last enjoyments and my last regrets—the regrets of my dying hour.

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Aug. 21st, 1839.

"That which we sometimes call pedantry and innovation, the forced introduction of French words by Chaucer, though hardly more by him than by all his predecessors who translated our neighbours' poetry, and the harsh Latinisms that began to appear soon afterwards, have given English a copiousness and variety which perhaps no other language possesses."—Hallam, Hist. Lit., vol. i. p. 170, 171.

It seems presumptuous in me to question this bold assertion. If by variety, we may understand *motleyness* (sit venia verbo), there is truth in what Mr. H. says: for words of the most various origin have been brought into the language, with scarcely any attempt to *naturalize* them by modifying their structure. *Single* words have frequently been introduced; but the most obstinate resistance has at all times been opposed to the use of their *derivatives*: this resistance

takes place even in regard to old English words. The *motleyness* which I have used will no doubt be objected to; though formed in the most regular manner. Of the Latinisms introduced in the 16th and 17th century, the greatest part are become obsolete. Many of the words of this kind in Johnson's *scanty* Dictionary are totally disused. My judgment upon this subject will of course be rejected, because it will be supposed to be grounded upon my imperfect knowledge of the language. But I refer myself to the translations from the German which have lately been made by highly educated Englishmen. Does not the poverty and stiffness of the language show itself in the vain attempts to render the thoughts of Niebuhr? It will be said that the difficulty arises from the difference of *idiom*. The difference of idiom is no insuperable difficulty in translation: if the language translated *into* is equally copious with that translated *from*, all that is required is familiarity with both, and taste for the substitution of idiom for idiom. The English language might be copious, in consequence of its want of *internal organization*. Being a language of mere *juxtaposition*, any word from any language with an English termination will easily become naturalized. But there is a fastidiousness in the admission of new words which deprives the language of this advantage. The English language is sufficiently copious for purposes thoroughly English: it has great power as used in Parliamentary debates—especially for abuse

and invective; but let any one attempt the translation of some eminent German writer in philosophy, or matters of taste, noting down the expressive words for which there is no equivalent, and Mr. Hallam's boast of copiousness will certainly be uttered in a less confident tone.

People who may be offended by words which are not used at boarding-schools and in magazines, would do well never to think of mental philosophy. Without a technical language it is impossible to treat such a science, or any of its branches. Abstract words are very much wanted in English. I think it absolutely necessary to form them from adjectives accompanied by the article, as the *Particular*, the *Universal*. In such cases a capital letter should be used, to show that the adjective has been changed into a substantive. *Subsume* is a word formed according to the best analogy. We have *consume*, *resume*, and others of the same family. *Subsume* is to draw a thing so as to take it under; absorb it. No better word could be found to express the operation of the mind, by which a superior class, or Universal, draws the inferior under itself.

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Aug. 22nd.

One of the difficulties with which *Mental Philosophy* has to contend in England is that of forming a proper nomenclature. The same difficulty, in various

degrees, exists among all nations. The Philosopher in the infancy of the Science, is obliged to adopt words in common use, in order to express notions which they do not convey to the mass of the people. This new employment of words is quite offensive to that multitude who, because they receive a certain degree of instruction, however groundless and unconnected it may be, assume a right to be *infallible* in regard to their own language. Where, however, as in Germany, philosophy becomes a fashion, this difficulty is easily overcome; for there is a numerous class who feel vain of using any newly-proposed nomenclature. But such a fashion is not likely to appear in England. Add to this the stiff nature of the English language itself—a language made up of fragments which resist every modification which composition and flexion make easy to others. Even that which has been done by Englishmen in Mental Philosophy, increases the difficulty; for we have already a half-established nomenclature in Locke, and in the works of the Scotch School. Unfortunately it is so loose, so unconnected into a system, that it must add to the inevitable confusion of philosophical investigation under such circumstances. If I should be able to carry on my German studies, I intend to take every possible pains to form a consistent metaphysical nomenclature. My principal guide shall be the old nomenclature of the Schoolmen, because it has long been incorporated with the common languages of Europe, though most people are not aware

of the fact, and its terms may more easily be confined to a certain shade of their present vague signification, than could be done with entirely new ones. I intend to collect gradually a small dictionary of such terms, changing and modifying them according to the progress of my knowledge of German Philosophy. Whenever I find an old English word fit for the purpose in contemplation, I shall make no scruple of reviving it.

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Aug. 23rd.

In proportion to my progress in the study of J.H. Fichte's philosophy,* is the occasional delight—one above every pleasure I am acquainted with—which possesses my mind in the contemplation of the highest *spiritual* truths. I have had during my life what might be called *religious acquiescences*—it is only now, since I cast off all pretended oracles, and applied exclusively to that within my own mind, that I have had religious *convictions*.

"But how can the mass of mankind be left to follow that arduous intellectual path?" My first answer is: that if there is no other, thoroughly consistent with truth, we must not try to mend God's works by our deceitful contrivances.—How strange that

* I am not a follower of the *Metaphysics* of Kant, or Fichte, i. e. I am not a pure *Idealist* or *Nihilist*; but I delight in the Moral portions of their Works.

people should be constantly speaking of *faith* in God, while their whole conduct in these matters shows that they feel the greatest distrust in the laws of mind which He has established! What are all the sacerdotal religions over the face of the world, but human contrivances, more or less grounded on erroneous views, which, though frequently acknowledged imperfect, and even mischievous, are nevertheless cherished and supported, from a fear that mankind must go to ruin, if these old, rotten props of civilization and morality should be removed? A wonderful inconsistency! to believe on the one hand that man is the noblest work of the Deity, and on the other to fear that such a work must be patched up with the filthiest rags of superstition and error! With those who shelter themselves behind Original Sin, I will not exchange a word—they are out of the reach of reasoning.

That man must *work his way* into the moral and intellectual rank for which he is designed, appears most clearly from his past and present condition. The peculiar mischief of the error to which I allude is, that its supporters would fix mankind upon a *peculiar spot,* in the line of this originally intended progress. This is essentially implied in the notion of that personal revelation which is supposed to be made to some privileged person, in order that it may remain as an *infallible,* and consequently unchangeable rule, for ever. This view is in direct contradiction with the fact, that mankind was, by God, intended

for *progress.* If mankind is progressive, the intellectual and moral model, at which he must aim, must be constantly assuming more and more distinct forms. That *model* is indeed one, and unchangeable, but the perception of its true forms must be gradual: distance and darkness—the weakness of the unpractised intellectual eye, must distort those forms, at all times, to the view of men who are, either individually or collectively, *children.* But here is the melancholy effect of all sacerdotal religions. At some one stage of this infancy a (supposed) *perfect revelation* of the infinite model is published, and, however perfect in itself, is at once blended with the imperfect conceptions of those who record it; and this imperfect *sketch* is placed for ever under the guardianship of superstitious fear, between the *Mind's eye* and the true model of divine perfection, whose direct revelations of goodness and beauty it hopelessly intercepts.

The permission of such evils would be a greater difficulty to the belief of a *personal* Deity, than all the bodily sufferings of the sensitive creation, if a provision to remedy them might not be discovered by a deep and dispassionate examination of the subject. The universality and power of the religious tendency in man are undeniable. It must be granted that, like all other *tendencies,* its first activity takes a wrong direction. The religious tendency of man appears, without exception, in the shape of *Idolatry.* Man cannot help believing in an *intelligent, personal* Power above him; but that power appears to him perfectly

analogous to himself. The course of this original deviation from the true direction towards religious truth, appears full of monstrosities all over the face of the earth; but as the original impulse is never exhausted, we must believe that its misdirection will be observed and corrected, in proportion to the increase of intellectual light which experience and its result, civilization, bring with them. Unfortunately, Priests and enthusiasts stand in the way of this gradual improvement: they stop it every where, in the name of Heaven, and persecute all those who encourage the development of the human mind. The original impulse is, nevertheless, too strong to be fully and permanently opposed. That same craving after the invisible source of our being which degenerates, at first, into extravagant idolatry, urges a certain number of thinking men to ransack, as it were, both the external and internal world, in the pursuit of that truth. There is, of course, much bewilderment in this process, especially under the irritating opposition which the ministers and slaves of the established religions oppose to it. But all is in vain—the search continues in spite of external persecution, and frequent internal disappointment. At length men are induced to look within themselves, where the perennial fountain of good lies concealed. To this *really* providential process it is that we owe the advance of Mental Philosophy—the only faithful guide that can lead us out of the chaos of error in which society (especially in England) is sunk. The

light of this philosophy is nothing else but the light which may be elicited from within every human mind not brutalized by ignorance and passion. When it shall have spread itself sufficiently, among those whom Providence appoints every where to take the *rational* lead,—when the painful, and it may be horrible destruction of the existing obstacles shall have cleared the way for the operation of the rational influences—it will be found that true philosophy may extend its blessed influence even to the lowest ranks of a society, where the corrupting extremes of luxury, which makes men insolent, and poverty, which makes them desperate, will not exist.

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Finished a Letter on the dangers of Ordination.

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* "August 24th, 1839.

"*The Moral Dangers of Ordination in Churches which, supported by the State, demand Subscription to Articles of Faith.*

"My dear young Friend,

"I have lately congratulated you upon your great success in obtaining the highest literary honours

* I have so altered the subjoined Letter, as to prevent its betraying the name of the person for whom I intended it. I abstained from sending it, by the advice of my son, who was persuaded that my observations would have produced pain and uneasiness, without preventing the impending evil.

which the University of Oxford bestows on men of your standing. If these honours do not place you in the highest ranks of external dignity, they certainly vouch for a degree of knowledge which will frequently be looked for in vain, among those who display the most pompous marks of distinction. As I contributed, in a certain measure, to your being placed in a situation where you have both developed your talents, and given the most satisfactory proofs of your excellent character,—as I had the happiness (for such I deem it) of averting the danger, in which you were, of being torn away from the books you so heartily loved, still a boy, and finding yourself doomed to the drudgery of some trade, the prosperous issue of your examination for Honours has in a great degree made your triumph my own, and raised my spirits as if I had had a more direct influence in the acquisition of your academical laurels.

"But in the midst of this joy at your success, my mind has for many days been contending against a cloud of fear and uneasiness, in regard to certain most serious dangers which inevitably attend it. To be explicit at once: I fear that you consider yourself already bound in pure gratitude to your University friends, to take Orders in the Church of England, as soon as you arrive at the age demanded by the Canons: this is the source of my anxiety. I can most readily conceive the astonishment with which this plain statement of my feelings will fill you. You cannot but be shocked at my language: you must

think me almost insane to represent your taking Orders as a serious danger. Such feelings in you, my young friend, are not only natural, but creditable. I should think less favourably than I do of your temper and character, if, *in your circumstances*, you were a total stranger to them. Your heart must have been hard as a rock, if it had been impervious to the mass of soft and enticing influences which have worked upon it from the time of your birth, have increased in intensity during your youth, and lately burst with the most attractive vehemence within your breast. What you feel is a work of delusion—of cruel, grossly interested delusion; but what does your kind soul know of such delusion—a delusion contrived by policy, deeply disguised under the shape of Godly zeal, and not unfrequently aided and supported by sincere but mistaken piety?

"Such, I grieve to say, is the actual state of things in England. The country is covered with snares of all kinds, for the purpose of strengthening the power of the Clergy, or, as the promoters of hierarchical power call it—the Church. Open your still unsuspecting eyes, and observe with what cruel obstinacy all kind of instruction is denied to the Poor unless they receive it in conjunction with the theological tenets contained in the 39 Articles. Examine, what you best know, the magnificent establishment in which you have been educated; and though your view of the vast field of knowledge must be still rather confined, you will soon be convinced, that

the University of Oxford is not a foundation for the enlargement and perfecting of that knowledge, but, on the contrary, an engine to keep it confined to the narrow limits, within which it does not threaten the immediate destruction of the obsolete philosophy and criticism, which are the basis of the Church-System. For a proof of this assertion I will apply to you. You have been a diligent student; you have shown yourself capable of every variety of instruction. Yet, after having laboured so strenuously that, at the approach of your final examination, you felt your mind almost ready to be paralysed by long over-exertion, is not your knowledge, I will ask you, though valuable in itself, almost inapplicable to the great interests of our moral and intellectual life? You have acquired the elements of pure and mixed Mathematics, and have proved yourself a great proficient in Greek and Latin; you have studied most minutely some of the Classics, and could give ready answers as to their contents. But has the University afforded you the means of obtaining a philosophical view of the history of Man? Have you a distinct knowledge of the relative place which the literature you have so faithfully studied, occupies in the progressive growth of our present mental state?—You have been obliged to study what is called Divinity, as an indispensable condition of your being approved in the Schools. But what is that Divinity? Is it not the continuation of the Catechism, which in your infancy was forced upon your helpless mind; of the positive

assertions of all those whom nature bade you respect, —assertions supported by spiritual fears implanted in your innocent heart—assertions repeated with the most imposing solemnity every week from the pulpit? Were you allowed to be instructed at the Grammar School, to which you did so much credit, unless you professed yourself a Member of the Church of England? Was not this the condition of your being admitted of King's College, London? Could you be matriculated at Oxford except you subscribed the 39 Articles?

"Melancholy, indeed, is the Slavery by which you have purchased both your instruction and your University honours. Yet, if that purchase were final, if you might enjoy the advantages, which at this moment lie justly within your reach, I should not feel alarmed for you, as I do at this moment: I should not tremble for you when I consider the allurements which smile on you on the one hand, and the evils which bar your retreat from the Gates of the Church, and threaten you, if you should attempt to establish an honest independence of mind. I see the Church inviting you to bind yourself to the support of her system—that system which has been inculcated upon you, exactly by the means which would have been employed, with equal success, to make you profess *any* theory of religion whatever. If you take Orders, the probabilities are great that you will prosper; but, if you step out of the path which leads to preferment, your prospects lose all

their cheerfulness. It is true that your abilities are such that, either at the Bar, or by means of a Professorship, or even by private tuition, you might establish yourself comfortably in the world. I know, however, too well the pain that your affectionate heart would have to endure, from the loss of all warm interest on the part of your clerical friends,—which would be the result of any of these steps.

"Not to disguise my convictions in regard to yourself, I must confess that I am endeavouring to open your eyes, under a feeling of despondency. At the very time when I write this letter I have resolved not to let you see it. I am fully convinced that my observations would only disturb your mind; that they would be a source of pain and alarm, unattended by the smallest chance of your deliverance. The net in which you are taken is inextricable. Here, indeed, I would drop the pen, were it not that by keeping your melancholy case in my mind's eye, I hope to state my views on the subject of Ordination, with more energy than if I had no distinct image of a real person,—and, indeed, of one for whom I feel the greatest interest,—to rouse my mind. There may be a few, who being placed in a similar danger, are yet less oppressed by the thick atmosphere of superstition than yourself. The thought that one of these may be rescued, allays, though in a very slight degree, my pain at not being able to deliver you. I will, nevertheless, allow myself to imagine that I am actually addressing you.

"You will not deny that human ingenuity cannot devise one method of pre-occupying a young mind in favour of any religious system, which has not been most powerfully practised upon yourself. I do not, here, question the *truth* of the system: let it be as true as its staunch supporters conceive it; this is no reason why you should have been almost totally disabled to judge of it, fairly and independently. The system may be true; but you have been made to hold it as *a prejudice*. It is mockery to say that you have been taught to *answer objections*. I protest to you, my dear young friend, upon the good faith of an honest man, that you have never been brought to a fair view of any such objections. Were you to examine the mere *secondary* questions of *Episcopacy* and *Infant Baptism*, not as stated by those who have bound themselves to defend the *Orthodox* side, but by the able and deeply-learned men whose conviction in favour of the opposite opinion made them renounce the advantages of Conformity, you would be infinitely perplexed. Yet, if you mean to take Orders, you will be obliged to bind yourself by solemn subscription, not only to maintain the truth of the Articles relating to these two questions, but the whole of that complicated system of theology which is professed by the Church of England. I repeat, that I do not wish to persuade you that such a system is *erroneous*: but I cannot conceal from you the *fact* of its being exceedingly *doubtful*. Had you sufficient time and leisure to examine the theology and

discipline to which your subscription will be demanded, I should only encourage you to undertake that task in earnest; but believe an old man whose experience has been as large as it is painful,—an examination, which might enable you to sign the Articles, with *moral* safety—considering that both your mind and feelings have been so long enlisted on the orthodox side—such an examination as might save your conscience in the eyes of God, if you fell into error, would require the study of four or five years, under the guidance of some person who could direct you to the true sources of information.

"I tremble for you, when I consider what may be your state in the course of a few years after ordination. In the sudden transition which a young man undergoes from the plain state of a layman to the *dignity* of a clergyman, an ingenuous, affectionate heart is so overpowered by tenderness on seeing the extreme joy of his parents, especially of his mother,—it becomes so full of prospects of utility, so happy in the congratulations of friends, so excited at the approach of the day when it is to be poured out from the reading desk and the pulpit, that it cannot conceive the possibility of ever being disturbed by doubt. But such impressions are not permanent. It must be confessed that there are minds, whom nature has made impervious to even the slightest suspicion of error in the religious system of their youth, their country, and their party. But very different is the case of an active mind, especially when

supported by a delicate conscience. To individuals of this temper, doubts against what they have professed so heartily, in youth, are extremely unwelcome; but they cannot dismiss them by an act of the *Will*. Their talents and diligence are employed in finding satisfactory answers: and indeed, at first, their success is encouraging. Some new view comes to their relief, which they treasure up in their bosoms as invaluable, and which, in order to enjoy it more and more, is constantly brought before the mind to be re-examined. Unfortunately this repeated examination generally ends in finding some flaw which shows the answer to have been a fallacy. Another and another answer presents itself and is followed by the same disappointment. The agony of the honest clergyman exceeds all description as soon as he is convinced that One article at least must be put aside, and covered under the thin veil, that it is an article of *Conformity*, not of *Faith*. But the wound is not healed by any of the numerous evasions, which pass more current amongst the Clergy than the mass of their hearers suspect. The destructive process however may not stop here: in regard to certain minds it is impossible it should; for to tell you plainly and in the sight of Heaven the result of my long and faithful examination, the *certainty* of belief which is demanded for the *whole system of Church Christianity*, infinitely exceeds the soundness of the principles on which it is built. It is on this point that I wish to fix your attention: the

*rational* foundations of that system (and surely the *supernatural* must not be grounded again on the *supernatural*—a *rational* beginning must be found for the admission of divine interference and authority)—the rational foundations, I repeat, of Church Christianity are totally *disproportionate* to the assurance demanded. This is the result of my *whole life*, and with this acknowledged result I am lingering, alas, too long! on the brink of the grave, ready to give my account to my Maker.

"I will now conclude, though, if I can muster a little strength, I may continue to write upon this subject, though not to force my observations upon you, unless you positively wish to become acquainted with them. My duty to you has been already fulfilled.—Were it not for the tyranny of Subscription, were it not for the unfeelingness of popular opinion, *supported* by *law*, in regard to the engagements of a Clergyman, a young man, in your circumstances, might venture into the Ministry, with security of conscience, under the conviction, that should he find his office and his reason at variance, he might pursue another profession, or means of living; with personal loss, unquestionably, but, at all events, with safety from scandal and abuse. But in the present state of things, every young man who takes Orders exposes himself to the possible alternative of being, his whole life, a HYPOCRITE or a MARTYR. I say the danger is POSSIBLE; yet it is a danger of such magnitude that the mere possibility

is enough to appal any man who loves God and his duty.

"That He may preserve you from such a danger, is the prayer of your affectionate Friend,

"J. B. W."

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25th.

Finished a general examination of Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History.

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29th.

I am reading with great pleasure and advantage Degerando, *du Perfectionnement Moral.* It is a practical view of Morals, written by a man who thoroughly feels what he teaches. Though he avoids theory, yet in treating of Liberty he falls into some of the common sophisms relative to that very difficult subject. In my opinion the usual controversy arises from a confusion of terms, and from a deep-rooted fear of disturbing *social* morality. The important distinction between *libertas a necessitate* and *libertas a coactione,* is seldom attended to. Nothing whatever can *force* my will: every man is more or less conscious of that fact; but at the same time we are, or may be, equally conscious that we are never decided without a motive. Degerando urges the case of a criminal in a dungeon. "Mais quoi! le prisonnier captif dans un cachot est privé de tout ce que vous

décorez du nom de liberté (this is an assumption; nobody in his senses can say so) cependant il médite de commettre de nouveaux forfaits . . . . . N'est il donc pas encore coupable? S'il est coupable, il est donc libre, même dans les fers."—Vol. i. p. 62. What thinking man ever did deny it? "Il est coupable" means, he is not what he ought to be. Why is he so?—Ans. Because he *will not* be better. Why again, *will he not* be better? Ans. Because he is free: so that a man is good *because* he is free, and is wicked because he is free: a strange cause which produces two opposite effects.—No man, I believe, did ever experience the absence of all motives, except his freedom. In all such arguments there is a confusion of *Will*—free-Will, and *Desire*—blind-Will. I think the best definition of *Will* is this: Free-Will is the faculty which can control Desire. Is this Will equally powerful in all men? This is what no speculation can ascertain. The Will is equally free from compulsion in all men; but is it equally *unseducible* by Desire? Well, then, it will be urged again: "Men sin necessarily." I answer, they sin wilfully; they do that which they ought not to do, and are guilty, i. e. they must bear the consequences. The moral worth of men depends on the degree of control which their Will has over their desires. This is perfectly true. I believe that the *Free Will* of Man is in accordance with his Conscience or Reason—"to will is present with me; but to perform that which is good I find not (says St. Paul, from

his own experience), for I delight in the law of God after the inward man." The inward man is the *Free Will*; the *flesh* are the blind desires. The inward man does not perform his *natural* office unless he subdues the outward to his control: in whatever degree he either fails to conquer or is conquered, in that degree he is not what he should be: he is not *good*, i.e. he is wicked. But as to his deserts, whether for reward or punishment, only God can judge, who knows the relative strength of the Controller and the Rebel in each individual.

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The same day.

Gieseler, Part II., pp. 22, 23, has some interesting quotations relating to the holy fool St. Boniface, the apostle, as he is called, of the Germans. His narrowness of mind is equal to his persecuting spirit. His subjection to the Church of Rome is quite puerile. The precepts of that church are equally absurd and childish. The Pope Gregory III. writes to the Bishop that he is shocked at hearing that some of the Germans had feasted upon a wild horse: *immundum enim est et execrabile.* Boniface wished to know what kinds of food were lawful, and what kinds unlawful. The Pope answers that neither crows, nor rooks, nor storks, were lawful for Christians; "much more should badgers, and hares, and wild horses be avoided. But you are well aware about (these things?) from the Scriptures. (That is, he refers

to Leviticus.) You also ask how long must bacon be kept before it is eaten. The Fathers have left us no directions about it. But as you ask advice, we will give it you, namely, it should not be eaten till it is dried by smoke, or dressed by fire. But if people like to eat it raw, let them wait till after Easter!"

The next passage is from a letter of Boniface to Pope Zachary, a most violent accusation against two Heretics, as he calls them. In this letter he charges one of them with introducing Judaism by allowing a man to marry his wife's sister-in-law. Yet this blockhead and his Pope did not think of the Judaism of the difference of food which they enforced according to Leviticus.

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Aug. 31st.

Finished reading the first four volumes of Michelet's Hist. de France, an admirable work. I hope the continuation will soon be out.

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Sept. 2nd, 1839.

A miserable night. My mind full of the project of having one, or two, of my nieces Beck here. Tried crutches, with no success whatever: the effort made me almost faint. Wrote to Captain Curtain, asking what is to be done if I obtain a promise of the purchase-money.*

[* For his son's Captaincy.]

4th.

For several days I have read Lucian in bed, early in the morning. No one who reads extracts only can know the merits of that admirable writer.

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12th.

As usual, suffering miserably, and remaining, to all appearances, stationary in point of *life*.

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I have read Lucian's Treatise *de Hist. Conscribendâ*; it is a very able piece of criticism. Two passages have particularly fixed my attention. One of these I might make my *motto*; he applies it to historians in general:

μόνῃ θυτίον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.

The other is an illustration, of which he avails himself, to urge the writers of history to forget their contemporaries and look to posterity. He says that the architect of the Alexandrian Pharos covered a part of the building with stucco, on which he inscribed the name of the reigning sovereign. Under this coat of plaster, however, he engraved on the rock the following inscription:

Σώστρατος Δεξιφάνους Κνίδιος
Θεοῖς Σωτῆρσιν
ὑπὲρ τῶν πλωιζομένων.

I think it most beautiful.

I am also reading the *Vera Historia*; and feel convinced that Swift took from it the hint for his Gulliver's Travels. But how far superior is here the modern to the ancient! Romance of all kinds belongs to modern literature; the ancients had very little talent for it.

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13th.

I dreamed I was playing the violin. The impression remained upon my mind, and I have just now been putting a few strings on the violin and tenor, and playing a little on both,—with pain indeed, but it is surprising how little I have lost, except in strength.

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*Letter from Dr. Channing.*

Sept. 18th, 1839.

My dear Sir,

It was a great pleasure to me to hear from you again—to see your handwriting once more. Perhaps it may hardly seem a kindness to wish you to continue longer on earth, suffering as much as you do; but as long as the powers are spared, the great end of life may be answered, and much good done. I sometimes think of visiting England, now that steam has done so much towards placing the Continents side by side, and in that case how great should I feel my loss, were your voice of welcome to be wanting! How happy should I be to talk with you of your history, and to get your views (among other subjects) of the late popish explosion at Oxford! Not that this is matter of surprise. I am prepared for such bursts of Romanism. This system could not have lasted so long, or spread so far, without

some deep foundations in our nature. The Ideas, or names, of *Church* and Antiquity are potent spells. Men in their weakness, ignorance, and sloth, delight in the shelter they find in a vast and time-hallowed organization. How strong and bold we become, when backed by crowds, and great names, and the authority of ages! It is not wonderful that Romanism should revive at this moment, when a morbid dread of innovation is reacting against the spirit of reform, and driving men back on the past. This Oxford movement is the more likely to spread, because it seems not to be the work of policy or priestly ambition so much as a genuine fanaticism. England is more given to superstition than this country, and as little given to the study of moral and religious truth. Still there is no great danger. In an age when the people are studying and applying physical laws, and dealing earnestly with physical realities, and getting the shrewdness which arises from the spirit of trade and money-making, fanaticism must be hemmed within narrow limits. The great, especially the ultra-conservatives, are more exposed to the contagion than the multitude. How desirable, amidst all these corruptions, that a nobler form of Christianity should be preached and practised with an unaffected, all-sacrificing earnestness, zeal, force. It is not by assailing the *low* in practice or principle, but by manifesting the *high*, that the great work of reformation is to go on. Whence shall this force come? I would, that I could look to Unitarianism with more hope. But this system was, at its recent revival, a protest of the understanding against absurd dogmas rather than the work of deep religious principle, and was early paralyzed by the mixture of a material philosophy, and fell too much into the hands of scholars and political reformers; and the consequence is, a want of vitality and force, which gives us little hope of its accomplishing much under its present auspices or in its present form. When I tell you, that no sect in this country has taken less interest in the slavery

question, or is more inclined to conservatism, than our body, you will judge what may be expected from it. Whence is salvation to come? This is the question which springs up in my mind continually—Is the world to receive new impulse from individual reformers, or from new organizations? Or is the work to go on by a more silent, unorganized action of thought and great principles in the mass? Or are great convulsions, breaking up the present order of things, as in the fall of the Roman empire, needed to the introduction of a reform worthy of the name? Sometimes I fear the last, so rooted seem the corruptions of the church and society; but I live in hope of milder processes.

I thank you for the kind things you have said of my letter on Slavery. I wish you sympathised with me more on the subject of War. I have no faith in the virtues which grow out of war. The courage of soldiers ranks little higher than brute force. It abounds among the lowest and most profligate men; and the sense of honour is almost synonymous with the want of moral independence. When I think of the spirit of duelling and war in the Christian world, and then of the superiority to the world and the unbounded love and forbearance which characterize our religion, I am struck with the little progress which Christianity has as yet made. Has not Mahometanism acted more powerfully on the Mahometan mind? This slow progress of Christianity is to be explained by its uncompromising hostility to all the selfish and sensual principles, and by the grandeur of its moral purpose, and thus attests its divine origin.—I am sorry not to have written a more entertaining letter to an invalid, but all my associations with you lead me to grave subjects. Do not hold yourself bound to answer, or even to think of my remarks, if any thing more interesting offers itself. When you can write, your letters will be acceptable to none more than me.

With sincere sympathy and respect, yours,

W. E. CHANNING.

September 15th, 1839.

Describing the artifices of Alexander the Pseudomantis, Lucian observes that it was difficult to escape delusion. "The contrivance required a Democritus, or Epicurus himself, or some one with an adamantine intellect, to detect the fraud; and if the *manner* of it could not be discovered, no less to maintain that it *must* be a Lie."

Alexander hated the Epicureans more than the Christians. An unfortunate zealot against imposture had ventured in a fanatic crowd to charge Alexander with being the cause of the death of some unfortunate slaves who, having the care of their young master, at Alexandria, had lost him. Alexander's Oracle was consulted, and upon its answering that the slaves had killed the young man, they were put to death. The young scamp was found however to have sailed to India. His return to Alexandria convicted the Oracle of falsehood, but of course few would conclude against the God. The Epicurean in question could not bear the imposture, and declared his conviction in the temple itself. Upon this Alexander declared, that whoever did not stone him would be called an Epicurean. The multitude fell upon the unfortunate unbeliever, who was however saved by the generous effort of a stranger named Demostratus. Lucian having said that the Epicurean was in the greatest danger, adds: "And very justly; for what business had he to be rational among so many mad-

men?"—Ver. Hist. II. § 45. Our friend Lucian was no enthusiast for Truth.

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September 20th.

It seems to me that from the middle of the 1st, and during the 2nd century, the Romans were improving in philosophy, though they lost ground in eloquence. I am reading Aulus Gellius, a writer out of the circle of the usual Latin studies. In c. iii. lib. i. he proposes the question whether, and how much, a man may deviate from what is right, in order to serve a friend. He quotes a passage from Cicero, where the great Orator says—"Ut minus Justæ voluntates amicorum adjuvandæ sint, in quibus eorum aut caput agatur, aut fama, declinandum sit de viâ, modò ne summa turpitudo sequatur." Gellius very acutely observes: "Cum agitur inquit, aut caput amici aut fama, declinandum est de via, ut etiam nonnunquam voluntatem illius adjuvemus. Sed cujusmodi declinatio ista esse debeat, qualisque ad adjuvandum digressio, et in quanta voluntatis amici iniquitate non dicit. Quid autem refert scire me in hujusmodi periculis amicorum, si non magna me turpitudo secutura est, de via recta esse declinandum, nisi id quoque me docuerit, quam putet magnam turpitudinem? et cum decessero de via, quousque digredi debeam?"

This has always been my question when I hear dis-

simulation demanded in favour of established religious opinions. Tell me what quantity of falsehood should be mixed, and prove that the mixture is proper: else I cannot grant your principle; for it amounts to the dereliction of the only intelligible principle in the case.

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Sept. 27th.

The Liverpool Mercury announces the conversion (a strange word) of a young lady, the daughter of a Baronet, to the Roman Catholic religion. Is it not evident that Roman Catholicism is spreading rapidly in England? I think there can be no doubt of this. I am convinced that the same must happen wherever Catholicity is not the established religion. Protestantism requires a strong political interest to maintain itself: it certainly stands upon that basis in England. A Church, maintained at an expense which exceeds that of all other religious establishments put together in the world, cannot be in much danger of falling, except by a revolution. The Roman Catholic religion is exceedingly modest and unassuming in England. The absurd invectives and exaggerations of the Protestant fanatics, give an air of vulgarity even to the most correct and just representation of the monstrous evils inseparable from Romanism. My works upon that subject have fallen into thorough disrepute: yet nothing can be more true than my

statements. But to a doubting Protestant, especially a person with a certain turn for sentimental religion, it will be enough to be told that I am an *apostate* priest,—to mention Fenelon and St. Francis de Sales. The heart of such persons will find a complete satisfaction in the *purified extract* of Romanism, which the Romish priests may safely administer to the higher classes in England. On the other hand, all attacks on Catholicism affect all orthodox Protestantism. The miraculous, mysterious, book-oracular Christianity, is more unsatisfactory and incomplete upon the Protestant principle, than upon the Roman Catholic basis. The result must be this: all who want strength of mind to be *creedless*, and are yet too sincere to content themselves with an external conformity to the various modifications of Protestantism, will be Roman Catholics. People of fashion will be any thing, or nothing at all. The only safety against Catholic encroachments, in politics, arises from the great mass of total unbelief which exists in the civilized portion of the world.

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Sept. 28th, 1839.

T. Beck and his father came after my dinner. The meeting with Luke Beck affected me deeply.

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29th.

Could not sleep at first, in consequence of the excitement of the preceding evening; but nevertheless awoke in better spirits.

26669

30th.

L. and T. Beck came after my dinner. We had a long conversation, during which my cousin showed the greatest interest in Ferdinand's promotion. He engaged to write to Lubbock to answer for the forthcoming of the purchase-money. I have written to Messrs. Cox and Co., the agents of the 40th regiment, to put down Ferdinand's name for purchase. The interest frightens me.

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Oct. 6th.

Began to write in *Spanish.*

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Oct. 7th.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a considerable part of whose Antiquities I am reading, as I amuse myself with Eichhorn's well-compiled Universal History, entirely made up of passages from the Ancients, mentions that Servius Tullius, having enlarged the city of Rome, ordered that there should be erected in the Lanes, καλιάδας (the Lexicons render the word Chapels, but I am convinced it should be projecting NICHES—called RETABLOS in Spain,) to the Entrance-Heroes—ἥρωσι προνωπιοις—at the expense of the Neighbours, and that there should be annual Offerings of Cakes from every house. At these sacrifices the slaves were to MINISTER, in attestation that their sacerdotal services were acceptable to the Heroes. This Festival was the COMPITALIA.

To any one perfectly familiar with Spain, this pas-

sage must be striking; for there was scarcely an opening to several narrow Lanes without a καλιας (καλια is a Nest, which the RETABLOS exactly resemble in their form and position,) at the entrance of the principal thoroughfare. That the Saints are an imitation of the Heroes of the Romans is well known. Fifty years ago every one of these ENTRANCE-Heroes—προνωπιοι—had an annual Festival, and, in the Country, all such Festivals were celebrated with abundance of MAZA FRITA (μαζα), fried cakes sweetened with honey. One of these out-of-doors Sanctuaries (and indeed one that stood near one of the City-gates, from which it had, by increasing devotion, been transferred to a Chapel,) was under the care of the Negroes at Seville; so that even in this respect the similarity of the two Institutions is clear. I will add, that all the City-gates had a RETABLO, occupying evidently the place of the ancient Gods to whose protection such Entrances were committed in ancient times. I am, indeed, more and more convinced, that there is not a single religious ceremony or custom among Christians which is not a very ancient one in greater or less disguise. It deserves observation that the primitive Roman religion had Institutions intended for the benefit of slaves, and to soften the evils of their condition.* As pious fraud has perverted every kind of knowledge in order to represent Christianity as totally different

* Read Dionysius' Observations on this very point.—Lib. iv. c. 14.

from all the religions of antiquity, it is an established falsehood among us, that only Christianity has taken a concern in favour of the slaves. That TRUE Christianity—as a rejection of all superstitions which oppress, darken and pervert the human mind and heart,—opens them, by the removal of those obstacles, to the divine rays and influences of the reasonable Conscience, and consequently to "whatever things are true, to whatever things are honest," &c.,—is perfectly true. But it is false that all the supposed Oracular Books have any direct tendency to the abolition of Slavery. "And if a man smite his servant, or his maid (N.B.), with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall surely be punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: *for he is his money.*"—Exod. xxi. 20, 21. Where has this pretended DIVINE Law been abrogated? Where has the barbarous PRINCIPLE of the Law been directly opposed? I remember the horror with which this passage struck me in my youth. I could never during the rest of my life efface that painful impression. If I were an American slave-owner, and had a heart to continue so, I would set up that passage over every entrance to my house.

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*To Dr. Channing.*

Liverpool, Oct. 9th, 1839.

My dear Sir,

So far is your last letter from being without interest to me, that I answer it without delay, that the strong desire it

has excited, of communicating with you upon the subjects touched in it, may support me against the external fatigue of writing.

Though absolutely shackled to my chair, and in constant discomfort, if not actual pain, from internal disease and total want of motion, my mind has nevertheless been more free for the last month. I wish, with all my heart, you would come to England before I lose the light of this setting gleam. I have always believed that you are one of the few who can see into the very bottom of my mind, without being startled at the conclusions it has settled in, at the end of its long and painful inquiries. Believe me, I do not claim assent—all I want is sympathy. I cannot find in myself any spirit of dogmatism, though I feel great *practical* security. That I may be wrong, is exceedingly probable; that I am *criminally* wrong, I cannot believe: my conscience assures me I am not.

I am not surprised to find such coldness and worldliness in the mass of the American Unitarians, as you describe. As you most truly observe, Unitarianism was originally a *protest* against a great absurdity. This protest had no vivifying spirit in itself; it is true. But the principle from which it proceeded was, in my view, the completion of Protestantism. All the other Protestant churches are in contradiction with themselves: we alone are consistent; and this is a great point. We have engaged to follow the light of reason within us—the divine light of the intellect in combination with the conscience—as far as it will lead us. Whoever compromises this principle, destroys and renounces it. What then is it we want?—To follow it devoutly. For a long series of ages it has been practically believed, that there is no devotional feeling unless it be supported by the *Imagination*; that there is nothing *heavenly* but what assumes the shape of a visible wonder; in a word, people have generally imagined themselves irreligious whenever they found themselves without an *idol*, external or internal,

a bodily shape either to be seen and felt, or to be *imagined*. Hence, the dangerous mistake of supposing the essence of Christianity to be inseparable from the firm belief in *historical* miracles; in *revealed* books, in unintelligible dogmas, called mysteries. Now, it is to me an indubitable fact, that the growth of the human mind prevents already, and will every day more and more oppose, the belief in this *scholastic supernaturalism*. The Oxford *Puseyites* originate in the fulness of this persuasion, combined with a most wilful determination of maintaining a supernatural mysticism. Intimately acquainted as I have been with their leaders, I can confidently assure you, that this is the case. They were (with the exception of one—a mystic by nature) inclined to German Rationalism. But being naturally *pious*, the tendency of their own minds alarmed them: they thought they were inevitably led into *unbelief*; and being too clever to be satisfied with the *historical* proofs of miraculous Christianity, they flung themselves on the bosom of a phantom, they call Church. Their plan is to stop all inquiry, and to believe because *they like it*. The leaders are still young, and as such possessed of an all-powerful *Will*. I give them full credit for good intentions. But their plan must prove ineffectual every way; except in leading some rather weak persons to Romanism. Is there then any help in Man?—I believe the hand of God will extricate us from this morally alarming state, though not without suffering, and evil. Christianity, in my opinion, must settle into *Unitarianism*—not that negative and empty form which we lament in many, but into the eternal, unchangeable, living religion which alone is Christianity. The very pressure felt by all good, intelligent, and liberal men—on the one side from the absurd claims of church Christianities, on the other, from the *irreligion* to which many fly as in despair—this pressure will lead the truly religious in heart, to the perception that the One only God, the living source of our soul, is an object of the most ardent love, in himself, and

in his intimate union with Man; and that this union is by its nature and essence *supernatural*, without needing the assistance of miracles or verbal revelations (all of which become inevitably natural the moment they pass through a human medium) to raise us to a state of real fellowship with our Maker. It is said that Unitarianism is cold. What an absurdity! Is not the Divine Being an object of love in Himself? Need we intermediary beings to give him interest? These are the implicit blasphemies of those idolatrous, mentally idolatrous, systems which have disturbed Christianity for ages. It is the system of original sin, and that of Redemption—that monstrous series of contrivances attributed to God to save his own creation; it is this system lurking in almost every mind, that gives Unitarianism its air of coldness. As no God has died for us, it seems we have no reason to be thankful, no ground for loving the Father of our *natural* being. What is natural, and what supernatural, in the great mystery of Man? This distinction is the bane of theology. No, my dear Sir, you yourself know that our pure belief in God does not generate coldness. From my own experience I feel certain, that all such church systems diminish the true love of God in the heart. Since I became convinced that the misnamed supernaturalism is no part of Christianity, no doubt has interposed its shadow between my soul and my God. My confidence in Him has increased; I await death as his fatherly message of love, not troubling myself to form schemes of the life to which he calls me, but feeling certain that in his hands I shall be safe. I am safe, and shall be so to all eternity.

I may be presumptuous in hoping great things from the religious system at which I have arrived, but I speak in simplicity of heart, and in the utmost conviction of my understanding. True Christianity, the spirit of Christianity, did exist, in spite of Church absurdities, in many individuals, during the past ages of our era, because the human

mind was either in total darkness, or in a mere twilight of reason; at present, and for the future, such a combination of scholasticism with true religion is, and will be, impossible. Let us tear up the last roots of *Churchism*; and true, devout, living Unitarianism will flourish.

I have been writing under an impulse, and I feel already exhausted. I conclude with hearty thanks for your friendship. It is a real, moral honour to me.

Your ever attached friend and brother,

J. Blanco White.

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20th October, 1839.

A Letter from Mrs. Whately, with notice of their annual bounty. God reward them.

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October 21st.

Having, within the last few days, felt an irresistible impulse to write in Spanish (it was occasioned by the very unexpected visit of my cousin Luke Beck, who strongly reminded me of my youth), I wrote yesterday morning two Spanish *Seguidillas* in connection with the character of a Spanish girl I want to draw up in a Spanish Tale. With a voice like Malibran, she has a noble spirit, and will not condescend to sing amorous ditties.

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23rd.

A better night. Finished Nicholas Nickleby, and resolved to read no more Novels: they make me unhappy.

25th.

A Letter from my Niece, Mary Anne Beck, who expects to be in Liverpool to-night, and sleep at the Hotel, as they will arrive too late to come here without disturbing me.

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26th.

A restless night. Mary Anne and her two brothers came.

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29th.

A rather better night. Began teaching Mary Anne Italian.

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30th.

Worse. Accompanied Mary Anne a little on the Violin.

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Nov. 9th.

"And surely to say that, because your conscience is satisfied, therefore you must listen to no other person, is to forget that you are one of a *race*, not insulated, but placed by Providence in association with other men—and necessarily responsible for the advantages of your position."—*Dr. Hawkins.*

Thus saith a naturally able man, a very good man,

and a leading man at Oxford, because when he sent me, during the worst of my illness, a long letter full of texts to prove the divinity of Jesus, I reminded him that there is "a persecution of kindness." *I am of a race,* and therefore must never have done listening to every individual of the race who takes upon him to instruct me. I believe that my good friend does not express the thought that lurks in his mind. It must be, you are of an *inferior* race, and having been placed in connection with the Oxford *race,* a superior one, you must never cease to ask instruction from them. If this be not his true, though unconscious meaning, he would perceive that I might retort in the same words, and demand he should at least read what I have published. But no. I sent him *Heresy and Orthodoxy,* and he would only look into it, because he found it very *wrong*: i. e. very much against his own principles.

How strangely does this priestly spirit blind those that give way to it! I have not ventured to answer my friend, because I am certain that he cannot bear the truths I must place before him, without giving up all friendship with me. Accursed Orthodoxy!

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*From Professor Powell.*

Oxford, Nov. 13, 1839.

My dear Blanco White,

Finding that my wife is sending you a parcel, I cannot let it go without increasing it by a small note, which may

perhaps be allowed to serve as some slight apology for my being, as I fear I always am, a very bad correspondent. But I am sure in the present instance it is not likely to be set down to any unmindfulness of you, or to any want of interest in those accounts which have reached us of your state of health, which I have been truly glad to hear has been of late not so bad as formerly; and I sincerely trust the visitor you are expecting will prove in every respect a source of comfort and pleasure. I wish it were in my power to think of any topics which would be likely to interest you, but among the miserable controversies and dishonest manœuverings of (I may say) *all parties*, in this place and out of it, it is difficult to find any thing to notice without pain and disgust. I meddle very little with any of them, but engage in writing only in the way of stating my views in a way as little controversial as possible, and leaving the polemical part to others. I have now in hand some lucubrations of this kind. During the summer I had an opportunity of putting forth similar views from Pope's pulpit during his absence; which I was highly gratified to find attracted attention, and that from some whose judgment is valuable. We shall never differ as to the importance of endeavouring to make people, if possible, think: nor, I imagine, as to the general nature of the grounds on which we would have them conduct their thoughts, or the main channel into which we would turn them, or the great ultimate object of truth to which they ought to be directed.

Believe me ever most sincerely yours,

BADEN POWELL.

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Nov. 14.

Continued some Spanish verses which I began yesterday. Read to Mary Anne a small portion of my Spanish novel.

20th.

Finished a pretty long piece of Spanish poetry.

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*To Professor Powell.*

Liverpool, Nov. 20th, 1839.

My dear B. Powell,

Many thanks for your kind note. To receive such lines from Oxford is like hearing the nightingale from the depths of the Arabian desert. You are perfectly right—we cannot essentially disagree; we may disagree in formulas, but our *truth* is the same. It is the eternal, immutable God whom we love, and to whom we would guide all mankind, if it were in our power. Nothing is more melancholy to me than to contrast the clearness with which I see the vanity of the theological controversies, with the dark obstinacy of the multitude that waste their minds and—what is worse—their hearts upon them.

May God give you patience, and also strength to assist others in the search of truth.

Yours, ever affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

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Dec. 3rd.

Abraham, as he appears in the Hebrew Myth, is a beautiful emblematical representation of the conscientious searcher of Truth. To perceive the similarity, we must remember that God is Truth.

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from

thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."—Gen. xii. 1.

In societies so full of error, and so essentially founded upon deceit as those which have been hitherto known in the world, no man can thoroughly love Truth unless he is ready to follow it at the expense of a similar sacrifice, whether it be understood figuratively or literally. When a man hears the call of Truth, and is ready to obey, he must set out without knowing whither he is led. No previous opinion should be exempted from the eventual demands of the Lord that calls us: we must not set any limits to our pilgrimage. We must even be ready to sacrifice that which we most love; even Isaac, the only son, may be asked as a victim, and we must not refuse him.

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Dec. 16.

A letter from Mrs. Whately, telling me that Edward would probably see me on his way to Dublin—to-morrow.

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Dec. 17.

Edward Whately came to see me. He is very much improved: his kindness affected me much.

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I received yesterday a most painful letter from ———. Truth and intellectual freedom will have

in him an able opponent. He has given himself up to the stream of enthusiasm which runs stronger than ever at Oxford. He shows all the vehemence of fanaticism, all its pretended feeling, and all its real unsociableness.

It is curious that he remarks against Dr. Hampden, that admitting principles which lead to what he calls Cousin's views, the Doctor still professes himself a member of the Church of England. He does not, however, perceive that his own love of truth is equally contradicted by an entirely opposite process.

He and all his party oppose certain principles without proper examination, because they know that they lead directly to certain consequences. Which is the more to blame of these two processes? The latter, I think. Dr. Hampden, and others in circumstances like his, deny the inference which is drawn by their adversaries. Now, it is unquestionable, that there is always more room for doubt when inferences are to be drawn from distant principles, than when the inference is acknowledged, and the question is about the truth of the first links in a chain of argument. In the question between Dr. Hampden and his opponents, it is not difficult to show that the foundations of the latter are exceedingly weak—unhistorical—mere suppositions. They strongly suspect this: yet they reject all examination, and cling to their notions from *affection*. They reject reason because they find it against them. This is open rebellion. Those that acknowledge its eternal

rights, but fall short of complete obedience, are pardonable sinners, not rebels.

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December 24th, 1839.

What is Enthusiasm?—If my memory does not deceive me, the author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm forgets to define the word which expresses his subject. Let me try to find a suitable definition or description.

Enthusiasm, etymologically considered, is an impulse, or excitement of mind, and is always supposed to be attended with more or less disturbance and agitation of the animal spirits. But here we must distinguish between enthusiasm connected with the invisible world, which is properly "religious enthusiasm," and that ardour required in all great enterprises, which has no reference to religion. The latter must be left out of this inquiry, as being only figuratively and by analogy called enthusiasm. Religious enthusiasm has this characteristic property, that through a nervous affection, it diminishes the impression of reality produced by the external world, and attaches it to that world, which whether it exist or not, out of us, has for us only the subjective reality, which we find in our imagination. Enthusiasm therefore originates in the imagination, and depends for its activity on all the physical and pathological causes which excite that faculty.

Let us further observe, that since Man is essentially *rational,* he cannot be in a healthy or right state, when the Imagination takes in him the lead, especially if that faculty manifests the symptoms of nervous excitement. Enthusiasm—that enthusiasm which is chiefly guided by notions unsupported by rational experience—*is a morbid state of the human faculties, which attributes more certainty to the representations of the Imagination than to the established results of experience.*

The clearest instance of enthusiasm is found in the legend of Abraham, if taken as history. Abraham thinks that he sees God, and hears him speak to him. Were he not in a state of morbid enthusiasm, he must have perceived that this notion was absurd. Upon what ground can he believe that he sees God? Has God a visible person? If he has, by what means shall Abraham find that the figure he sees is that of God, and not that of some other unknown—may be, mischievous being?—"Persons favoured with revelations, it is said, must have had some way, unknown to us, to ascertain their reality." But could that method be resolved into anything but the vision itself—the subjective notion that God had taught them that method? Any rational man who perceived in himself a tendency to see visions, should immediately suspect his own state of health. And what shall we say to Abraham's absurdity in believing that this *unknown* vision had a right to demand the life of Isaac, at his hands? Which is more probable;

that God should ask for a human sacrifice, or that Abraham was subject to fits of delirium?—Abraham, it is said, doubted not. Here we have the characteristic symptom of Enthusiasm—*certainty*—established on grounds that will bear no examination.

Enthusiasm is, therefore, inseparable from Church Christianity. *That* Christianity began in enthusiasm. What else was that vehement and almost phrenzied belief in the approaching second coming of Christ to reign on earth with those who, having endured martyrdom, would be entitled to the first resurrection? It is, indeed, remarkable, that true enthusiasm increases in proportion as its grounds or supposed foundations become weaker. The Christians' contempt of life was greater in the third century, than in the second and the first. As history became faint and shadowy, the Christians' convictions grew to be irresistible.

Whoever believes that *things spiritual,* as they are called, are more credible than things visible,—that the interests of a life to come should disturb and confound those of the present,—is an enthusiast: his belief is disproportioned to its proofs. Alas! what a mass of evil arises from this quiet and settled enthusiasm! Persecution of some kind is its inevitable consequence. It is much easier to know a good man, than to know who is in possession of true doctrines. But enthusiasm overlooks the proofs of moral goodness, and, giving the preference to those of orthodoxy, will sooner join in communion with the

King of Hanover, than with a Unitarian whose character was ever free from even a suspicion.

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*From Dr. Channing.*

Boston, November 20th, 1839.

My dear Sir,

I received your last quite unexpectedly, and reply to it at once, not to lay you under an obligation of answering, but because you take pleasure in hearing from me, and I feel your right to every service in my power. I rejoice that you are enjoying more comfort—and that the mind is unharmed. May this unspeakable good be continued. Let the inward life strengthen, and the decay of this poor tabernacle is a matter of no great moment. I cannot agree with every part of your letter. You seem to me to make religion too exclusively a product of the Reason, and carry your jealousy of the Imagination too far, though such jealousy is most natural in one, bred to Catholicism. If imagination had no office but to give material forms to God and Heaven, I should agree with you; but is it not the function of this glorious faculty to see in the Universe a type of the Divinity, in the sun a shadow of his glory, in the beautiful, sublime and awful of nature the signs of spiritual beauty and power? Is not the imagination the principle which tends to the Ideal, which rises above the finite and existent, which conceives of the Perfect, of what eye hath not seen or ear heard? I suppose we differ chiefly in words. I consider religion, however, as founded in the joint operation of all our powers, as revealed by the Reason, the Imaginative and the Moral sentiments. I think too you speak too disparagingly of Historical Christianity, though here also I may misapprehend you. To me the history of Christianity in the gospels is inestimable. The life, spirit, works and

character of Jesus Christ are to me the brightest revelations of his truth. I know no histories to be compared with the gospels in marks of truth, in pregnancy of meaning, in quickening power. I attach great importance to the miracles. They have a vital union with the religion, are full of it, and marvellously adapted to it. They are not anomalous, arbitrary events. I have no faith in abstract, insulated, purposeless miracles, which indeed are morally impossible; but the miracles of Christ *belong* to him, complete the manifestation of him, are in harmony with his truth, and at once give to it, and receive from it, confirmation. I should pay little heed to a narrative, from ever so many hands, of the resurrection of a low-minded man, who had died for no end, and had risen, according to the story, to lead as low a life as before. But the *resurrection* of *Christ*, related as it is to his character and religion, taught and sealed with blood by the grand reformers of the race, and related as it is in the gospels, is a fact which comes to me with a certainty which I find in few ancient histories. The evidence of such miracles as accompanied Christianity seems to me precisely suited to the moral wants of men in present and past times, i. e. to a stage where the moral development is sufficient to discern more or less of divinity in Christian truth, but not sufficient to produce full, earnest faith. I need miracles less now than formerly. But could I have got where I am, had not miracles entered into the past history of the world?

Another topic about which I may have misapprehended you, is *supernaturalism*. I doubt if I know what you mean by it; but I have not room to write about it. I will only say, that I have no sympathy with those who disparage *the natural*. Nature, in its broad sense, as meaning the created universe, with its order and law, becomes more and more sacred, divine in my sight. But a letter would not hold what I might say here. Your true meaning I should like to get.

If a happy moment for writing comes on you, I wish you

would communicate more particulars about the new school of Oxford. The Church of England has seemed to me so dead, that I am interested by any sign of life, though it be a fever. I suppose too that the movement is in resistance of the material tendencies of the age, and in this way it may indicate a higher moral feeling, though it is too servile, too distrustful of the reason, too exclusively given to the imaginative, to promise any good. Is it a sudden burst, or has it grown up slowly?

I wish to know the result of the Trinitarian controversy in Liverpool. I have read with pleasure two or three tracts of Mr. Martineau and Mr. Thom, and hope to see the whole. I was particularly struck with their freedom from cant, from popular appeals, with their noble faithfulness to their convictions, with their calm reliance on the power of truth.—Did they produce *immediate effects*? If so, your city must have made no small progress, moral and intellectual. I do not subscribe to all the positions of these gentlemen; but I feel great respect for the power and spirit manifested in what I have read.—I trust I shall hear that you continue more comfortable.

With sympathy and respect,

Your Friend,

W. E. CHANNING.

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Dec. 26, 1839.

I have received, this morning, a letter from Dr. Channing, dated Boston, Nov. 20. It chiefly contains objections to views which Dr. C. thinks to be expressed in my last letter to him. I wish to lay those objections clearly before me, and make a few observations upon them, which probably I shall afterwards enlarge in an answer to my excellent correspondent.

"You seem to me to make religion too exclusively the product of the Reason, and carry your jealousy of the Imagination too far."

Imagination has a powerful and direct tendency to Idolatry, which prevents its being a safe guide to true Religion. Our first religious concern is to discover the true Religion: this can only be done by Reason. Let us call it Judgment, in order to avoid confusion. Truth must be discovered either in the works of God, namely, ourselves and the external universe,—or in the convictions of other men; such are traditions, written and unwritten. According to the language used in Theology, Religion must be known either by *authority*, or by logical investigation. It appears to me unquestionable, that in both cases we *exclusively* require the *investigating*, not the inventive faculty—which is the faculty called *Reason*, or Judgment. Does Christianity consist of propositions directly stated or suggested by God? This, with its real or pretended proofs, is an *historical* investigation—Imagination can only mislead us in such an inquiry.

"But is it not the function of this glorious faculty (Imagination) to see in the Universe a type of the Divinity, in the sun a shadow of his glory, in the beautiful, sublime, and awful of Nature, the signs of spiritual beauty and power?"—

The function of Imagination in all this is to afford emblems and figures, corresponding to truths previously settled by the supreme judging faculty. In

regard to *Truth*, i. e. to existence or fact, Reason is supreme. Imagination is the disguiser of Error. It gives the air of reality to what does not exist. "It is true that Imagination has been given to us by God, and so have the Passions with which Imagination is intimately allied; and they can only be useful when under the direction of Reason.

"Is not the Imagination the principle which tends to the Ideal, which rises above the finite and existent, which conceives of the Perfect, of what eye hath not seen, or ear heard?—I suppose we differ in words."

By Imagination I understand the Faculty which reproduces the impressions made by objects of sense. Imagination cannot overpass the limits of "what eye has seen, and ear heard." All the operations above mentioned belong exclusively to a modification of Reason, which perhaps might be called *Ideality*. Reason alone rises above the finite. Reason alone, as Ideality, penetrates the regions of Infinitude, and leads to what is *Necessary* and *Universal*. Such ideas are quite above the region of *Images*, where every thing is essentially limited. The vividness of Images depends on the accuracy of the outline.

"I consider Religion, however, as founded in the joint operation of all our powers,—as revealed by the Reason, the Imagination, and the Moral Sentiments."

We certainly agree here in substance;—in *practical* religion all our faculties are concerned, except, I should say, that which reduces every thing to sen-

suous images.' From the beginning of the world to this day, it has been the great enemy of true religion. If we employ Imagination, we shall reduce God to the shape of a man, however vague and indistinct refinement may strive to make it. We shall have a heaven in *space*, which shall be nothing but a shadowy continuation of our present life.—

But is Imagination to be banished from practical Religion?—It is my conviction that the *spirituality* of our Religion depends on that exclusion.

Are we to banish *feeling*? All feeling arising from Imagination should also be excluded: but not the feelings which arise from the *moral sense*. These flow from *Reason*, since they have their source in *Conscience*, which is the practical *Reason*.—

I am not an enemy to the sublime emotions which arise in our bosom at the contemplation of ourselves and this wonderful universe, with reference to God. They constitute the most blessed moments of a rational existence. But I consider the Imaginative Faculty—that faculty which clothes every idea in matter—as the arch-enemy of those truly spiritual enjoyments.—Cleanse the internal sanctuary from idols, if the Deity is to take his seat within it.

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Dec. 31, 1839.

I have been able, at different periods, to compare the highest assurance of Hope which the common

Devotion, grounded on *dogmatic* Christianity, and that which results from the spirit of Faith and philosophical Meditation respectively can give, and I solemnly declare that, at all times, the latter has been to me the highest. The usual Devotion has always agitated my feelings, the philosophical Devotion has settled and becalmed them; the one has distressed me by a longing of more assurance and certainty—somewhat in the way of the Torture by the Pulley, when the body is suspended by an arm, so that the great toe of one foot shall just touch the ground, and induce the sufferer to stretch himself in search of support; the other has always given me a point of rest, more or less broad, but always solid and steady, with the additional conviction, that it is madness to wish for more in this Life.

## CHAPTER X.

### EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

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#### LETTER TO THE REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

1839. Begun . Aug. 8. Finished Aug. 21.

"My dear Friend,

"When, yesterday,* you asked for directions concerning the letters which may be found among my papers, at the time of my death, I could not but express to you my regret that the very imperfect state in which I leave the second part of my Memoirs, would give you a great deal of trouble, since your kind consent to finish and publish them will require an attentive examination of my various note-books. It is true, that from them and from the 'Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy,' a satisfactory view may be collected of the development of my views from the time that I separated myself from the Church of England to the present; but it will be a great satisfaction to me, to leave a clue which may diminish the labour of your task. Perhaps I may here repeat things which I have already stated; but I do not think that any reader who may take a

[* See vol. i. p. 406.]

serious interest in the examination of my mind, will object to such imperfections in the execution of these Memoirs.

"In the year 1826, having received a diploma conferring upon me the degree of Master of Arts of the University of Oxford, I was confirmed in the resolution, which I had conceived a short time before, of taking my residence there. I cannot well describe the pleasure I felt upon finding myself again in that beautiful city, not, as before, a stranger to the University, but a graduated member of it, and enjoying all the rights and privileges of a Master. I felt young again, and in the full vigour of my early academical life. My health improved under these pleasurable impressions. Frank, sociable, and unambitious of any thing but kindness, though I had been mortified by the opposition which my degree had met, there was now not one feeling of resentment in my breast against the person who prevented the unanimity of the Convocation in my favour. Nor had I any suspicion of the spirit which is not unfrequently found among the *fellows* of colleges, who constitute a kind of Aristocracy among the Masters. (It may be called *Hetairocracy*; a name which, if the state of the University should be thoroughly examined, would be frequently wanted to explain its internal life.) Oriel College, to which I requested admission, was, at that period, one of the most distinguished bodies of the University, and its *Common Room*—the *Fellows'* Common Room, as it is

called, though Masters not on the Foundation may be admitted as members,—united a set of men who, for talents and manners, were most desirable as friends and daily companions. In the Oriel *Common Room* I met with great kindness. I now imagined I had found a home, but this was a delusion, which vanished as soon as I understood the constitution of the CLUB (for the Common Room is nothing else) to which I had been admitted. I imagined that this admission had placed me upon an equality with the other Members; but it was not so. I found that even a probationary Fellow took precedence of me, whatever might be my seniority as a member of the Common Room. I was, in fact, only to be tolerated. The exceedingly good feeling of the Members who admitted me concealed my inferiority from me, for some time, till I first learnt it from the impertinence of a servant. Under these circumstances, I feared that notwithstanding the unresisting manner in which I submitted to my condition, the evil of it would increase in the course of two or three years, too much to be daily endured. As there is a perpetual change of Fellows, and their vacancies are recruited with very young Bachelors, it was evident that the time would soon arrive when I should find myself much too old indeed for my superiors of the Common Room. I must, however, thankfully acknowledge, that the various individuals who were elected Fellows during the five or six years that I spent as a resident Member of Oriel, treated me with the utmost kind-

ness.* But I was in *a false position*: individual good nature could only relieve, but not remove my uneasiness.

"I had brought to Oxford the *ideal* of a College—a place for the education of youth, for the improvement and completion of early learning during the vigour of life, and of external repose and internal activity for a few old votaries of knowledge, who, probably in consequence of that devotion, had continued an unmarried life till age had left them with only a few friends or distant connections. To this *ideal* the English Colleges did, in a great degree, answer, a century ago: but they are at variance with it in the present day. I conceive, nevertheless, that if my intellectual character had been in accordance with the *Genius Loci,* I might have found a resting-place at Oxford. But that result demanded a strict dependence on the most bigoted party, which will always govern the University. I began my residence in a state of the nearest approach which my mind could bear towards that party; from feelings which have been stated and explained elsewhere. I had silenced my understanding in favour of the Church of England, but this acquiescence was more an act of devotion than of conviction, least of all was it a voluntary surrender of my Reason: to that supreme faculty I

* "I must make particular mention of the Rev. Dr. Hawkins, now Provost of Oriel, and at the time of my reception, Dean of the College. We lived a great deal together, especially during the long vacations: both then and at all subsequent times his friendship to me has been as unreserved and affectionate, as if we had been brought up together."

have preserved, during my whole life, its rights unviolated.

"A natural consequence of the character and temper of my mind was the intimacy I soon contracted with Dr. Whately, a distinguished leader of whatever liberal spirit existed at Oxford. This connection did not prevent my being joined, by affection, with two individuals of a very different tone of mind—Mr. Ogilvie, of Baliol, and Mr. Cotton, now D.D., and Provost of Worcester College. Their tone of mind and my own were very different, if not opposite; but our *hearts* were in unison, and this was enough for me. We have been separated for some years by the impassable gulph of Orthodoxy; but I feel my heart yearn towards them, especially towards Dr. Cotton, than whom I never knew a more benevolent, upright, and sincere man.

"So little sympathy with the governing party could not allow me to take root in the University. If my mind had been working in the direction of the Church, I might gradually have found favour and encouragement; but my thoughts pointed another way. I was truly at home with those who, though Orthodox enough to remain within the Church, were habitually struggling against the mental barriers by which she protects her power. It was therefore evident that I could not *serve* under the Church-and-King banners; and notwithstanding the politeness with which I was treated, (two or three Heads of Houses made the only exception,) it was clear that I

could never hope to receive encouragement as a resident Master.

"I had solemnly engaged with myself not to accept preferment in the Church; and the publications which rounded my petty income into a comfortable sufficiency had been sacrificed to my theological and academical studies, so that I could not but feel the narrowness of my pecuniary means. Had I had supporters among the leading members of the University, it would have been easy to employ me in *editing* for the Clarendon Press, which is frequently the *secondary* employment of young men not particularly distinguished for their knowledge. But I was a foreigner, and not brought up at the University. These sources of jealousy (to which even Dr. Whately alludes in his friendly dedication to me of the *first* edition of his admirable work on Romanism) could not be easily stopped: the leading Members might be well inclined towards me, but unless I had been totally *devoted* to their service, they would not have favoured me at the risk of exciting dissatisfaction.

I continued in this kind of neutrality, till the contest about Sir Robert Peel took place in 1829. I was at that time in London, exerting myself in the difficult work of setting up a LONDON REVIEW, which totally failed of success. My first intention upon hearing of the approaching election, was not to vote at all. But a letter from Mr. (now Dr.) Pusey,* at that time one of the most liberal members of the

[* See vol. i. p. 453.]

University, decided me to give my vote to Sir Robert Peel. The fury of the *No-Popery* party against me knew no bounds. I suffered greatly in my mind; but satisfied that I was acting properly, I endured all with fortitude. One of the secondary reasons which moved me to appear at the Election, was the wish to assert my right to vote as a *British subject,* though born abroad. I have always been very jealous of a privilege, which if I had remained neutral, most people would have doubted. My right of voting was examined by the two lawyers, who acted as assessors at the Poll, and was found incontestable. In company with my friend, Mr. Senior, I went to Oxford. I found the place in the utmost excitement, and, as it might be fully expected, had to endure the insolence of one or two, the killing looks of many, and the coldness of former friends, who were for the No-Popery Party. In this party I found, to my great surprise, my dear friend Mr. Newman, of Oriel. As he had been one of the annual Petitioners to Parliament for Catholic Emancipation, his sudden union with the most violent bigots was inexplicable to me. That change was the first manifestation of the mental revolution, which has subsequently made him one of the leading persecutors of Dr. Hampden, and the most active and influential member of that association, called the *Puseyite* party, from which we have those very strange productions entitled *Tracts for the Times.* While stating these public facts, my heart feels a pang at the recollection of the affectionate and

mutual friendship between that excellent man and myself; a friendship which his principles of Orthodoxy could not allow to continue in regard to one, whom he now regards as inevitably doomed to eternal perdition. Such is the venomous character of Orthodoxy. What mischief must it create in a bad heart and narrow mind, when it can work so effectually for evil, in one of the most benevolent bosoms, and one of the ablest minds—in the amiable, the intellectual, the refined John Henry Newman!—Yes: that man repels me, at least declines and discourages all correspondence with me, at the moment when he shakes hands with persons of whose worldly and interested views, of whose dark and perfidious characters, he must be fully aware—only because they are ORTHODOX, and I am a HERETIC.

"Mr. Newman however continued on terms of intimacy with me after I had voted against his Candidate. That Mr. Cotton's friendship would not be diminished by my voting against his party, I was perfectly certain: indeed I know he said, when every one abused me, 'I am sure that only conscientious motives have decided Blanco White.' Valuing as I did Mr. Ogilvie, and knowing that he must have deeply reprobated my conduct at the election, I went to his rooms the day after I returned to reside at Oxford, having buried the still-born LONDON REVIEW. I told him I came to ascertain whether he was still my friend. He was cold at first, but when I had explained to him my motives, his affection

returned undiminished. But my separation from the Church put an end to our connection, more effectually than death itself.

"I mention these particulars because they will suggest the state of my feelings during the remainder of my residence at Oxford, more effectually than any description. I still had friends, but the mass of the Senior Members of the University preserved a scowl which I could not well endure. My health grew worse, and when Dr. Whately left Oxford for his See of Dublin, I was so ill that I did not go out of my rooms for several months. But enough of external matters: let us come to the workings of my mind in regard to religious subjects during that period. I will try to describe them; but I must first remind you of some of the principles, which at all times have directed me.

"It has always been impossible for me to conceive that if God ever intended to supply the deficiencies of the laws of Nature, in regard to mankind, by means of his direct interference, he could have left that effort in a state of insufficiency for the attainment of its proposed end. When the general laws of the Universe make us suffer, when they make us feel either their unfitness for the attainment of what the constitution of our species seems to demand, or actually crush us as if we were of no account in the Universe, we may 'justify the ways of God to man,' by truly alleging that we judge of good and evil as if we were the centre of the Creation, which is a presumptuous supposition. But if we are to believe

that God has intended to work *supernaturally* for the sake of man, on purpose to make him the scope and centre of a certain system independent of, and supplementary to, the general laws of nature, that system must be adequate to the fulfilment of its final end. A supernatural revelation, intended to supply the deficiencies of our mental faculties, to substitute the certainty of divine authority for the uncertainty of logical deduction, should not leave us in doubt as before; it must be fully competent to work its object —to impart a certainty not to be shaken by any *reasonable* doubts. If this is not an unquestionable truth, I do not know how to proceed; I must fall into the ancient Pyrrhonism, and declare that truth and error are mere names. However, as I am not disputing, as my intention is only to give an account of my own mind, it is enough to say that in all my religious inquiries respecting Revelation, I have taken the above proposition as a basis. The wish of my heart has constantly been to find a direct Revelation of God to Man in the Bible. I have not made the unintelligible mysteries, and miraculous narratives, which the Orthodox divines contend for, a ground for doubting the divine origin of those books. What I want is a proof of the *fact*, that they are revealed; that they are delivered by God as his *direct* authority among men. That proof however must be strong enough to remove all *reasonable* doubt; strong in proportion to the *primâ facie* incredibleness of the asserted facts.

"At the beginning of the second part of my Me-

moirs I have stated the painful disappointment I experienced when, in hopeful and earnest sincerity, I examined the proofs alleged for the inspiration of the Bible.* I will not repeat the reasons of that disappointment, I will only state that it did not interrupt my theological studies; but the more I studied, the more was I confirmed in my grounds for rejecting the theory of Inspiration. How then, it will be asked, did I so long resist the force of such arguments?—I answer, simply by means of strong and deep-rooted *affections*. Soon after my arrival in England, the love of religion, early implanted in my heart, revived: that feeling of love was strengthened by a most deliberate resolve to obey every call of duty in regard to God and Man. I had passed my youth in the habitual persuasion that certain doctrines had been made known by direct revelation, and certain narratives had their truth warranted by the same means. It is true that, by a very summary process, I had totally disbelieved, at one time, the existence of any such revelation. By a kind of intuition (I am now convinced) I had arrived at a legitimate conclusion, on the supposition that the authenticity of the Bible, as well as the sense in which it had been revealed, could not be ascertained or proved except through the infallibility of the Church, whose centre of unity is the See of Rome. Having convinced myself that the infallibility of the Church was a groundless theory, I inferred without hesitation that

[* Vol. i. p. 275.]

no verbal revelation existed; and it is a curious fact that, after lamenting my acceptance of that conclusion, and employing five-and-twenty years in the study of Divinity, the clearest argument which has convinced me that the Bible is not an inspired collection of writings, is essentially the same which made me formerly disbelieve a Revelation independent of human Reason.—But to proceed: the habit of considering a belief in some supernatural revelation as an essential duty to God, my fear of offending him, arising chiefly or almost exclusively from my desire to please him, made me constantly avert my mind from the clear result of my investigations, namely, that the *fact* of Revelation—the very ground and foundation of theology—had never been and could never be sufficiently proved. But in spite of this conviction I continued my daily study of the New Testament, regulating my conduct by the spirit of the Gospel, which I have always perceived without difficulty, and loved without effort. *Affections* alone, I repeat, prevented for a long time my deliberate and open adoption of principles which, the moment the influence of these affections was checked, became to me plain and almost self-evident truths.

"I believe I want the *power*, as well as the will, to dissemble. I should have detested myself if, living in the habits of intimate friendship with persons whose affections towards me depended, in a considerable degree, on their conviction that we agreed substantially in what is called Faith, I had kept them

under a delusion, by external conformity and silent acquiescence. The fear of losing their sympathy, the anticipated misery of that divorce of souls which Orthodoxy inflexibly demands between its votaries and the heretic, was the cause of many an effort to make up by devotional feeling the discordance of our judgments. I cherished the agreement of our religious affections, and as I found no difficulty on that point, I often felt as if my purely intellectual doubts had vanished. I beg you to remember that, at the very time when the objections to the doctrine of the Trinity were forcing themselves irresistibly upon my mind, I proposed myself to the Bishop of London as an *unsalaried* Minister of the Church of England, for the Spanish population of the island of Trinidad. This inconsistency, this apparent contradiction, expresses to the life the temper and constitution of my soul: it shows how susceptible I am of religious sympathy, and how unconquerable is my love of rational conviction. Here you see at once the fountain-head of all my sufferings through life.

"This strong peculiarity of my character explains the frequent revivals of a flattering hope that, by means of some new view, I had arrived at a final settlement of my religious doubts. Nothing could exceed my joy when I felt the yoke of Orthodoxy eased by that class of writers who, boldly venturing to the very borders of Heterodoxy, can nevertheless suddenly stop their impetuous course, which, according to the judgment of stricter Churchmen, must

necessarily lead them to heresy. I imagined, indeed, that I could check myself at the same point, but in this I was deceived. My reason could not be satisfied of the soundness of the ground on which the stop was made, and my struggle was soon renewed.

"It was during one of these intervals of partial repose that, at the suggestion of the Archbishop of Dublin, to whom I had spoken in the highest terms of the early portion of Neander's History of Christianity, I tried to begin a friendly intercourse, in writing, with that very learned and truly excellent man. Though I had not written Latin for a long time, I soon got ready a long letter in that language, giving him a summary account of myself, thanking him for the pleasure and assistance I had received from the first and second volumes of his Ecclesiastical History, and acknowledging my gratitude to Heaven for what I then conceived to be a final settlement of my religious views. I cannot but deeply regret, that this letter procured me the honour of a dedication of a subsequent volume from that celebrated author. It was, indeed, an awkward combination of circumstances, which, without any ground to blame myself, annoys me to this day, although I received a most kind and truly tolerant answer to my apology. I almost wish that, in case of a second edition, Dr. Neander may omit his dedication, as I hear that my dear friend, Dr. Whately, has done in the second edition of his work on the *Errors of Romanism*. Heaven knows it is not indifference to the

honour which these distinguished men have bestowed upon me that suggests the wish I now express. In my copy of the *Errors of Romanism* you may still read what I wrote on the fly-leaf, when the arrival of the book at Kensington, where I was staying on a visit to my friend Mr. Senior, made me acquainted with the public testimony of esteem given to me by Dr. Whately. I do not complain that the public testimony is withdrawn; I trust the affection which produced it is still fully alive. I have reasons to believe it is. I know that Dr. Whately has numerous and bitter enemies, who would draw inferences injurious to the Orthodoxy of their Prelate, if they saw my name at the head of one of his best works. My wish in stating these facts is only to explain these untoward events of my theological life, by the confession of my own weaknesses.

"In regard to the development of my views against Orthodoxy, after I had submitted to the acute pain of an external separation, I believe I can make the internal process almost visible by an illustration which I think I have employed somewhere else. Like seeds kept from germination by a superincumbent mass of earth, the accumulated principles of denial which had so long lain deep in my mind could not but expand with a rapid growth. Even before I took the resolution of declaring myself a Unitarian, the serious meditation and study which produced my work on *Heresy and Orthodoxy* had delivered me from all fear of sin in drawing theological con-

clusions.* The check, nevertheless, which I constantly felt from my public connection with the Church, and my daily intercourse with a high Dignitary and his truly pious family, made that conviction of but small practical effect. I certainly did not dissemble; I showed myself as I was. In Christ, I worshipped the Deity: I conceived his humanity as an emblem of the only God. I generally read a prayer every morning to the family of the Archbishop. The collection of family prayers used in that family was written by the Archbishop himself. One, however, of them, I remember, was written by me, addressed to Jesus, and relating to his resurrection. It burst, as it were, out of my heart, as soon as I joined the family, during one of my strong aspirations after unity of faith with them.

"In this state of mind and heart I had persuaded myself that the New Testament afforded as much evidence for, as against the Divinity of Jesus, and that, in such a doubt, an honest man might remain in a Church professedly Trinitarian, without as-

* "The progress of intellectual superstition, that fear of sin in reasoning, is clearly to be seen in the few documents of early Christian freedom which escaped the destructive hands of the Church. The tyranny of Orthodoxy was not fully established 'till the Council of Nice had played the oracle under the influence and protection of Constantine, and that able *sophist* Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, had introduced the system which bears at present the name of Calvin. I will translate a passage of Gregory of Nazianzum. 'Speculate away about the world or the worlds, about matter, and soul, about rational natures both good and evil, about the resurrection, the judgment, the satisfaction of the sufferings of Christ. For on these subjects though to hit (the truth) is not useless, to miss it is free from danger.'—Orat. 33, (de Theol. I.) *in fine*."

senting to the theological quibbles connected with that doctrine. So strongly did I imagine that I could thus, remove all *practical* difficulties, that remembering the good offices which the Rev. George Armstrong had rendered me (though we were personally unknown to each other) when during my residence at Oxford, a Dublin paper abused and calumniated me for several days together; and knowing that soon after this friendly service, Mr. Armstrong had resigned his living, and declared himself a Unitarian, I conceived a desire of bringing him back to the Church. For this purpose I made inquiries as to his residence, and having discovered it, I wrote to him a letter, conceived in accordance with my view. To this letter I received a very powerful answer, in which my crude and unsifted notion of the equality of evidence on both sides of the question, was utterly demolished. I could not dissemble my defeat; but still endeavoured to find some reason for not declaring myself a Unitarian. Another, and another unanswerable refutation of my arguments, which I received in the course of a few weeks, made me perfectly aware of the self-deception by which I wished to spare myself the truly awful pain of the separation which honesty demanded from me. In my private meditations I had never given distinct utterance to, I had not embodied the state of, my own thoughts; everything had been resolved into feeling; but the moment that a written discussion obliged me to express my ideas distinctly, I could not hesitate a mo-

ment as to my conduct. I instantly determined to tear myself from my friends. I knew well that great sufferings awaited me; but alas! they have exceeded my conception. You saw a few days ago, a few lines I had written in a Book which I keep by me, as an irregular Journal. In a fit of agony, such as I cannot well describe, I remembered that my friend Dr. Whately used to say, that in me he had seen a martyr to truth. This recollection suggested the following note: (July 19th, 1839,) 'I am at that stage of my martyrdom, when the flame, which has not been able to extinguish life by suffocation, subsides, and the burning coals melt the limbs.' But I must not digress. What I say respecting the contents of my letters to Mr. Armstrong is from memory. It is probable he preserves them: if my conjecture be true, and if, upon publishing my Memoirs, you think that those letters throw light upon the object of the Memoirs, which is to make myself known such as I am, do not hesitate to insert them.* They prove my defeat; but I never fought for victory, unless the victory was Truth's own.

"My journals of that period are copious in details; I do not believe that I have recorded anything which implies reproach to my friends. I am sure I have not, since I never had any feeling that would make me express dissatisfaction If in the agony of pain which I suffered, any complaint dropped from me, let it not appear after my death. All my feelings con-

[* Vol. ii. pp. 41, 48, 49, 58, 68.]

tradict it: Love and Regret (*Desiderium*) fill up my heart so as to exclude all other sentiments.

"The Letters on Heresy and Orthodoxy were written before my separation from the Church. I considerably altered their tone when, free from my engagements, I prepared them for the press in Liverpool. But whoever may take the trouble impartially to examine the substance of those letters, and the spirit of the SECOND TRAVELS OF AN IRISH GENTLEMAN, far from being surprised at my leaving the Church soon after I had written those works, will find it difficult to explain, except in the way I have done it, how, with an honest mind, I continued any longer in it. Add to this the fact of my having composed about the same time a Letter on BAPTISM, which you have seen inserted in the CHRISTIAN TEACHER. That letter contains the result of a laborious examination of all the passages of the New Testament which mention Baptism. The conclusion at which I arrived is, that neither Jesus, nor the writers of the New Testament, ever considered baptism in the light of a sacrament; that they did not demand it from all; that the manner of performing it was not fixed; and that though Christians may use it without blame as a ceremony of initiation, they may omit it without danger. This was enough to exclude me from the Church.

"These instances of conviction, derived from the study of the New Testament, tend to show the foundation on which my mind was working. The theo-

logical system, called Orthodoxy, undisturbed by Protestantism, is most complete and symmetrical. Could the existence of an inspired Church be proved, not conjecturally but demonstrably, as the nature of the subject requires, it would be impossible to shake it. But the study of the New Testament, provided the student does not take the *Church conclusions* for granted, or conceive it to be his bounden duty to arrive at them, must readily show what I have before asserted—that neither Jesus nor his apostles intended to establish any system of abstract doctrines or ceremonies whatever. The character of the Christ's preaching, as we have it in the Gospels, is *destructive* of Judaism directly and of Heathenism by inference; that of Paul, *destructive* both of Judaism and Heathenism in the same breath. Paul, carried on by circumstances, shows an incipient tendency to be *constructive* and positive. The Gospels show nothing of this kind. That those vague notions of a Church, which appear in the Gospels, do not proceed from Jesus, is proved by the fact that he did not provide any means to *incorporate* his followers except mutual love, a slight foundation indeed for a Church. There is no provision for the existence of sacred Books; all that is said about Peter and the Keys has the stamp of a later age, and is so indistinct, that it would do little honour to the discrimination of the founder, if he had intended any thing like the ambitious establishments which have assumed the name of Churches of Christ.

"I will grant as much as possible to the defenders of the authenticity of the Gospels: I will acknowledge that what is alleged against that authenticity does not rise above *conjecture*. But premising that the authenticity would not prove the inspiration of those writings, I ask, have the arguments any higher character than *probability* in regard to authenticity? Can anything but hypothetical *fitness* be pleaded for inspiration? Now, the orthodox probabilities have very high probabilities against them; the hypothesis is all conjectural. And is it upon such grounds that Heaven can have demanded an *absolute certainty* of belief in the authenticity and divine authority of the whole Bible? The demand would be monstrous. Belief, according to the immutable laws of the human mind, cannot be stronger than its grounds: God, who gave such laws to our souls, could not make it a *moral* duty for man to act against them.

"This immense disproportion between the historical and critical proofs of the divine origin of the Scriptures, and the absolute certainty with which the acceptance of them as unquestionable oracles in Doctrine, and infallible testimonies in History, is demanded, must be felt by all who have reflected upon the laws of credibility, and are not blinded by superstition. The strange school of Divinity, which has recently appeared at Oxford, has no other origin but the dissatisfaction of its founders, in regard to the external evidences of what, according to my judgment, is improperly called Christianity. Determined

by their WILL, and by their perception of the moral attractions of the *Spirit of the Gospel,* which they have not learnt to perceive independently of the Church machinery of direct revelation, proved by miracles,—and, aware that the common grounds of their faith were sinking under the pressure of enlightened reasoning and correct information, they have fallen back upon the Church for support. I will not stop to show how vain that attempt is, especially with persons who will not acknowledge Rome as the *determining* mark of that Church which they seek. Their Church is absolutely a *non-descript*: it cannot be found by any mark whatever; and, in fact, it means only THEMSELVES.

"Having thus explicitly asserted that true Christianity cannot demand an unhesitating reception of the Bible as an oracle authorized by God, I am bound to state my notion of TRUE Christianity, and the reasons why I still call myself a Christian.

"There can be but one true religion,* consisting in that state of mind and that external conduct which arise from the original and unchangeable relations between God and his rational creature Man. In

* "Religion, subjectively considered, is the acknowledgment of all our duties as divine commands.—In this definition no positive assertions are made part of religion. It is enough that *speculatively* the existence of the Supreme Cause of things be assumed *problematically. Practically,* however, we have a perfect idea of God, as of that Being whom our conscience commands us to obey; though we have no argumentative means of demonstrating the existence of God theoretically.—Extract of a Note, and part of the Text, in Kant's *Religion in der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft,* p. 184."

this sense, I believe that 'Christianity is as old as the Creation.' It would require immense labour to trace, in the ancient religions of Asia, the various forms in which this true religion of nature, this religion of which the seeds are inseparable from the human mind, appeared more or less developed at various stages of civilization. A moderate learning in the right direction, however, is sufficient to discover in the ancient religions of India, Egypt and Persia, that figurative language which represents the eternal wisdom of God as his *Reason* or *Word*; that *Reason*, by which he manifests himself in the universe, and especially within our minds; that *Word*, which expresses the Deity throughout the unlimited ocean of Existence. These two terms, the sense of which is most happily combined in the Greek *Logos*, contain a most appropriate symbol of all which the human mind can know of God. It is a vain attempt to seek for knowledge of the Deity anywhere but within ourselves. To define God is to deny him; for *definition* is limitation, and He is unlimited. Useless or worse than useless are all the arguments of Natural Theology, unless we have previously found the proof of the being of God in our own souls. The idea of the eternal and unlimited Spirit must proceed from the consciousness of the temporal and limited spirit. We know ourselves as this limited spirit, and we are conscious that we have not made ourselves to exist: another spirit must consequently exist, from whom the nature and limitation of our own depend. The

limited proves the unlimited; else what could have set the limits? This greatest of all truths requires but a small degree of reflection, just an incipient development of the power which enables the human mind to look into itself, to raise the notion of a Deity within the conscious breast. A much higher refinement is certainly necessary to avoid that vastly extended *anthropomorphism*, that conception of God as a Man, which, unconsciously to themselves, most Christians derive from the unphilosophical theology which lies at the foundation of their Creeds and Catechisms. Whoever owes the first notion of God to the notion of what are called his *Works*; whoever conceives God's universe as the result of *contrivance*, has the image of a Man for his God; he is a mental idolater. It is true that we cannot conceive what appears to us a complicated result, but as the result of contrivance; yet to transfer this our mental law of conception to the nature of God himself is to deny his Godhead. Contrivance implies resistance, and limited as well as gradually exerted power: such ideas are contradictory of God. But to proceed:

"The only method to avoid erecting a mental idol for our God, is that of exclusively seeking him within our mind. To us 'God is a Spirit,' only when we find him in our own spirit. The ideas of life, activity, thought, and goodness, have their primitive source within us. The pure in heart of all ages, of all civilized nations, have been aware, practically at least, of this truth. Hence the undeniable fact, that the

earliest conditions and fragments of Philosophy have asserted, figuratively of course, that God can only be known through a divine emanation which dwells among men, or is *incarnate* in them, for the purpose of guiding them again to God. All the names of this 'light of God which lighteth all men that come into the world,' and so becomes their Reason, agree in a fundamental notion of *Rule* or *Government*. Among the Jews of Palestine that divine manifestation is called the Messiah, i. e. the Anointed or King: among the Greek Platonists, especially the Egyptian Jews, it was denoted by the name Logos, or Reason —the most powerful of all Guides or Rules to the *rational* or *logical* being; among the Stoics, especially of the later and purer school, it is called the Ἡγεμὼν, the Supreme Commander, the Leader.

"The Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, whose works in many passages agree with those of Saint Paul, has some beautiful observations on the Deity within us; I think they cannot fail to interest every sincerely devout mind. I therefore extract some passages from my common-place book.

'Allured by the power and spirit of some passages in Jeremy Collier's Preface to his Translation of Marcus A. Antoninus, I procured a copy of that Translation, which I have kept some time by me, without having any occasion to compare any part of it with the original. Wishing, however, in this dreary state of my whole being, to refresh some of the great Philosopher's sublime and strengthening

thoughts, upon which my mind had habitually dwelt for a long season, I met that passage (B. ii. c. x.) in which the truly inspired moral teacher urges every man to dwell constantly in the sanctuary of his own mind, adhering inseparably to the Deity that inhabits it, and offering to him the only suitable service which a man can offer to God. The description of that service is not surpassed in beauty, in moral truth, in sublime simplicity, by any thing in the New Testament.

'Unfortunately, Jeremy Collier, either from want of a thorough understanding of the original, or (what is more probable) from dulness of perception in these matters, has reduced the passage to a most commonplace piece of moral advice. Yet he might have taken a hint from Causabon, whose translation of this passage, though rather diffuse and over anxious, possesses considerable merit. Let us compare the two translations.

'(*Causabon*, B. ii. part of c. xi. His division of chapters is different from that followed by Gataker.)

'There is nothing more wretched than that soul which, in a kind of circuit, compasseth all things, searching (as he saith) *even the very depths of the earth*; and by all signs and conjectures prying into the very thoughts of other men's souls; and yet of this is not sensible, that it is sufficient for a man to apply himself wholly, and to confine his thoughts and cares, to the tendance of that Spirit which is within

him, and truly and really to serve him. His service doth consist in this,—that a man keep himself pure from all violent passion and evil affection, from all rashness and vanity, and from all manner of discontent, either in regard of the gods or men. For, indeed, whatsoever proceeds from the gods deserves respect for their worth and excellency; and whatsoever proceeds from men, as they are our kinsmen, should by us be entertained with love always; sometimes as proceeding from their ignorance of that which is truly good and bad (a blindness no less than that by which we are not able to discern between white and black), with a kind of pity and compassion also.

'Causabon, in a long note, appears anxious to apologise, as it were, for so much knowledge, in a Heathen, of the indwelling spirit; as well as for translating Δαίμων by *Spirit*, which he seems to regard as a consecrated word. I think the substitution very judicious. The Δαίμων, who has his sanctuary within the Spirit, the superior part of the rational being, Man, is *God himself*. The rational creature must be such, through the rationality of God: there is but one *Reason* in the Universe. The Stoics held this doctrine most distinctly; but found it difficult to express that mysterious union of the divine nature with man—a union which preserves a perfect distinction between the personality of Man and that of his Creator. Here, of course, they set up various theories; but chiefly that of Emanations

from the Deity; subordinate beings, directly partaking of the divine nature—Δαίμονες; but they did not pretend to be very definite about them. The Stoics used that name to indicate certain spiritual phenomena; leaving, however, all explanation of the unquestionable fact unattempted. Those who can read St. Paul (and many other passages of the New Testament) with a mind totally unprejudiced by Church Theology, will find that the expression HOLY SPIRIT is used very much in the sense in which the Stoics employ the Δαίμων. A well-known passage of Seneca will make this evident, and the more so, in consequence of the intimate connection of the Latin word with our word SPIRIT.

'*Sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet, malorum, bonorumque nostrorum* OBSERVATOR (this applies to the evils) *et* CUSTOS (this to the good), *hic prout a nobis tractatus est ita nos ipse tractat.* (Causabon quotes this passage in a note; I have transcribed it here from memory.) How perfectly consistent with this language would the scriptural phrases be—Grieve not the Holy Spirit; Ye are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, &c.

'Let us now compare Collier's version.

'Nothing can be more unhappy than the curiosity of that man that ranges every where, and digs into the earth for discovery; that is wonderfully busy to force a passage into other people's thoughts, and dive into their bosom; but does not consider that his own mind is large enough for inquiry and entertainment, and that the care and improvement of himself will

afford him sufficient business. And how is all this to be done? Why, by being neither passionate nor heedless, nor yet displeased upon any account, either with the gods or men. For as for the gods, their administration ought to be revered upon the score of excellency and station. And as for men, their actions should be well taken for the sake of common kindred. Besides, they are often to be pitied for their ignorance of good and evil; which incapacity of discerning between moral qualities is a greater misfortune than that of a blind man, who can't distinguish between white and black.

'This is making short work of difficulties. The passage might be called a commentary; but it would be a commentary most injurious to the text, which it in fact strips of every characteristic, both of the Stoic school and of the mind of the most distinguished disciple of that school. I will not copy the Greek passage, to avoid fatigue, but must endeavour to translate it, as it impresses my own mind.

'Nothing can be more wretched than the man who moves in a perpetual whirl after knowledge, who will (as people say) undermine the earth in search of it, and try to discover, by conjecture, what is in other men's minds; forgetting all the while that it is sufficient for us to keep inseparably near to that one Deity who dwells within us, devoting ourselves sincerely to his worship. Now, that worship consists in keeping oneself* pure from passion, from rash-

* 'I have doubted whether to translate *oneself* or *him*; but I think

ness of conduct, and from dissatisfaction with what proceeds either from the gods, or from men; for, indeed, what comes from the gods deserves reverence, owing to their excellence,—and what proceeds from man should be regarded with tenderness, on account of our common kindred; though there are occasions when the workings of man become, in a certain sense, objects of pity, owing to the ignorance of good and evil, which they betray—an ignorance no less lamentable than the blindness itself which takes away the power to distinguish between white and black.'

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"My study of the Gospels, which, in spite of much that is not Christianity, contains undoubtedly the true outline of the character of Jesus and his doctrine, has convinced me that he intended to establish the religion I have described, the purely spiritual religion of the conscience, the Logos, the light of God in man. One of my principal grounds for this assertion is his never recommending any one of those things which, at all times, have been considered essential to the establishment of a religious sect. The religion of Jesus (to judge by an admirable sentence which cannot be spurious *) has no temple; its worship consists in the cultivation of our intellectual nature, that faculty which is capable of knowing and

it comes to the same thing; for the Δαίμων and the Man are identified during life, and whatever pollutes our conscience pollutes the altar and throne of the divine Guide. In the same sense does St. Paul speak of grieving the Holy Spirit.'

* "John iv. 23, 24."

delighting in *truth*, not logical truth alone but *all* the *truth* implied in the relation of man to the Supreme source of reason and, of course, of moral truth, which is nothing but *practical* reason. Jesus leaves the government of his disciples, not to a Priesthood, but to the SPIRIT which is in them. This is another emblem of the conscience. The truth of this Christianity, every sincere man will find in himself; the power of it will be fully felt by every one who *truly*, i. e. practically, embraces it. In this manner, I trust in God I am a Christian. The writings of the Old and the New Testament are historical documents, which I treat exactly like other remnants of antiquity: I approve in them what I find worthy of approval, and reject what I see no reason to believe or follow. This is to follow the Spirit, the guide of the Christian.

"St. Paul shows a thorough acquaintance with the practical tendencies of true Christianity. For many years, whenever I have wished to repose myself in the burning desert of theology, I have found a refreshing oasis in that sentence, within which Paul himself seems to have taken refuge when bewildered by his fiery, but indistinct thoughts. 'Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'* Had not the

* "Phil. iv. 8, 9."

writer of this passage been under a strong, though not perfectly unmixed conviction that what he wished to propagate was the religion of the *conscience,* the religion of the Spirit, or Christ, or Logos, which dwells in the soul of man, he would have been obliged to write a whole treatise on Morals, instead of this simple enumeration of names. He was well aware, (and this shows the natural quickness of his mind, as well as the *substantial* purity of his intention,) he knew by his own experience, that the internal monitor and no other can teach whatever is pure, just, and holy.

"This *true* Christianity embraces and claims as its own, every thing that has spiritual worth. Hence the common fallacy of pleading this, its glorious property, in favour of the mixed Church systems which usurp its name. I absolutely reject those systems because they discredit genuine Christianity among the mass of men who think with independence. I know, however, that the beautiful conception, which I have every reason to attribute to Jesus, lies perfect under the monstrous excrescences which now surround it —in Creeds, Articles, and Catechisms. To use an illustration suggested by some lines of Michael Angelo, containing a thought of Plato, we have only to strike off the redundancy, and the Godly image will be found within the shapeless block. It lies however very deep within the hard pudding-stone mass of the doctrines both of England and Rome, and we must not spare our hammers.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"J. B. W."

"POSTSCRIPT.—I have thought it a duty to exert myself to the utmost of my present power, in order to save you the labour and perplexity which my irregular journals and common-place books are likely to occasion to you after my death. For this purpose I have looked over some of the latter, which are still with me, leaving to you those that are in your possession. From the common-place books of 1837 and 1838, I have cut out a few thoughts containing matter directly connected with, and illustrative of, the mere hints which I have been able to compile in the preceding letter. A few of the last leaves affixed to this manuscript, contain extracts from a German work of Suabedissen, in 1831, Professor of Philosophy at Marburg. The title of the Work is *Die Grundzüge der philosophischen Religionslehre,* a thin 8vo., which would be read by many with pleasure and advantage, if it were translated in England, which I fear it will never be. England cares not for German philosophy, and much less when combined with German theology. I read this work last year, and found it a source of comfort amidst my acute sufferings: it raised my mind to God, and inspired the cheerfulness of hope into my dejected soul. How many German works have this power over me! The reason is, that they generally abound in the views and principles of *divine philosophy,* and forget the jargon of the Church theology. But I will not here dwell on this point. My wish is only to inform the reader who this Suabedissen is. I have another excellent work of his—indeed I think

it superior to the one just mentioned, though it was written before it. Its title is *Die Grundzüge der Lehre von dem Menschen*, or *Elements of Anthropology*. There is an interesting, though short biographical article on Suabedissen, in the *Conversations-Lexicon der neuesten Zeit und Literatur*, by which it appears that this distinguished writer was born in 1773, from parents who could scarcely afford to give him a learned education. In spite however of difficulties, his talent and application procured him means to go through the usual University studies. He was tutor in various families, and rose to be instructor of the Prince Frederick William, of Hesse. Most of his early writings were upon Education. He obtained two philosophical prizes from the Academy of Sciences of Copenhagen; the 1st is entitled, *Results of the philosophical investigations concerning the nature of human knowledge, from Plato to Kant*: the 2nd, 'Internal Perception.' I have to thank Fichte, the son of the celebrated Philosopher, successor of Kant, for my acquaintance with the two works of Suabedissen above mentioned. How miserably narrow does the system of the English Universities appear the moment one sees even a few specimens of what the Universities of Germany produce!—'But German speculation is very dangerous.' True: to wealthy Church establishments founded upon the misty twilight of the dark ages." *

"J. B. W."

* "Liverpool, January 25th, 1841.—I thank God that I have been

[*Extracts referred to in the Postscript.*]

Has man any knowledge of God? How does he obtain it? What does he know of God?—Have our Divines examined these Questions honestly and deliberately? No: they are treated evasively: all take their flight to Revelation. Yet Revelation is a word without meaning, unless there is a previous knowledge of God. The whole religious system stands therefore upon a foundation of sand. But such baseless systems are just what all hierarchies want. If the first notions of the Deity were clear and sound, it would be difficult to build upon them any such theories as that of original sin, and the atonement. Where then shall we obtain these notions of God? Whence shall we derive the answers to the above stated questions?

"Not from any conceptions or principles; for if they contained those answers, the questions must have been answered previously to the establishment of such conceptions or principles. We must look for the solution in the living reality, wherein all knowledge has its ground."—*Suabedissen.*

This living reality is our own spiritual life. The knowledge of the *Unlimited* is implied in the knowledge of the *limited* being.

enabled to read these Memoirs for the last time. My bodily sufferings are dreadful, and the misery produced by my solitude is not to be described. But trusting in God's Spirit within me, I await my dissolution without fear. Into thy hands, O eternal source of life, of love, of virtue, I commend my spirit."

"J. B. W."

Our Author is convinced, that there is no way of arguing any man into a belief of the existence of God. He must find the conviction in himself, or be without it. I have long been persuaded of the same truth.

But how are we to convince ourselves of the Existence of God?—Such conviction does not depend upon argument. We are conscious of our existence, and conscious of its being set within bounds, and we must perceive by the same act of consciousness, that a boundless being has set our limits.

"In the knowledge of our Limitation is contained the knowledge of the Limiting, *as such*, consequently of the not limited, i. e. the Unlimited."—*Suabedissen.*

According to my observation, this is the usual ground of belief in the Deity. Children are invariably struck with the question, who brought you into life? applied to the case of their parents, and their parents' parents, &c. A conviction that there must be one who did not *derive* life from another is generally the result of that simple view. But this is only a method of directing the mind to the *aspection* of its own *conditioned* and limited existence, an *aspection* which is identical with that of an unlimited Being—the Source of the limitation. The same applies to the existence and limitation of the mental faculties.—But it should be the business of a man's life to dwell upon this primitive, immoveable, simple fact. We should, as it were, live in it. Just to think of it, and then put it aside as a matter of speculation,

is to deprive ourselves for ever of the only true source of religion. All, whatever does not grow out of this ground is more or less superstition and enthusiasm.

"If nothing but limited beings existed there would be no limiting being. But in that case there would be no limited beings; in other words, the Limited, being limited by nothing, would be unlimited."

## CHAPTER XI.

EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

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1840.—Ætat. 65.

January 1st.

My retrospect of last year is for the most part painful and gloomy. Constant suffering, constant imprisonment in my chair, a most painful separation from my son, constitute an existence with nothing pleasureable in it. I have however to thank God for composure of mind, and undarkened understanding. But the prospect before me requires a constant exertion of self-government; else I should grow despondent.

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2nd.

A very restless night—greatly convulsed. New-Year letters from Harriet and Louisa Moore. Dr. Sutherland came full of the idea that the use of my legs might be restored by rubbing. I agreed to do the rubbing myself, and began the practice steadily.—Mr. Thom told me that my London Publisher wished for leave to publish the Poor Man's Preservative on his own account. I feel very much inclined to re-

cast that work into, *The Plain Man's Preservative against both Roman and Protestant Popery.* My little work, as far as it goes, is as correct as I can make it; but my views were very limited when I wrote it. I was at the lowest ebb of mental freedom, which I ever suffered since my first total casting off of Church Christianity. I considerably corrected the Poor Man's Preservative before Milliken's Edition; but I still was in the fetters of the Church of England, though they were nearly filed open. I should not like to die, leaving many parts of that work unrecalled or unexplained. Whatever relates to Romanism requires no correction or explanation; but the work makes extravagant admissions in regard to Priesthoods, Miracles, the Bible, &c. I will endeavour to bring my plan into effect.*

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January 4th.

A PARABLE,

*Occasioned by Dr. Hawkin's Sermon on the Duty of Private Judyment.*

Two parties of powerful Squires divided between them a large portion of land, which they used as preserves for Game. These two parties were originally one, but, in the course of time, a considerable number of individuals separated themselves with the ob-

[* See Appendix.]

ject of establishing a system of game-keeping more liberal to the peasantry than the original one. The old party had given notice, that besides a considerable number of steel-traps and spring-guns set in their grounds, which the peasantry had to fear if they ventured to cross in any direction, without taking a game-keeper for their guide, any one who should be found trespassing was to be shot. The *liberal* squirearchy declared that this system was shocking. They, on the contrary, urged it to be the duty of every peasant to examine and explore the preserves, only taking care not to tread upon any of the innumerable triggers set therein.—Now, which of these two systems had the advantage in mercy? I believe the first. I would certainly hunt, if possible, the old squirearchy out of the country; but, though their conduct was tyrannical, the peasantry had only to submit and they were safe. But the cruel hypocrisy of the *liberal* party was intolerable. Why did they urge the poor people to examine those most dangerous grounds, knowing that hundreds would perish in the search?

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January 6th.

"Stick to your journal course: the breach of custom is breach of all."—*Cymbeline.*

This is an admirable maxim. It cannot be too much inculcated upon young people: but, like all general maxims, it cannot be interpreted literally;

else it would sanctify the worst abuses. It applies directly to habits of industry.

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January 11th.

I heard a simple observation from my cousin M. Anne, which, being the pure offspring of feeling, bears a deeper meaning than she suspects. I was observing that to write well is a very difficult thing, and that many who shine in conversation, write very clumsily. She said it was true; that to her a book well written, though in prose, appeared poetry. This is perfectly true: it expresses the music and charm inseparable from good style.

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16th.

A letter from Mrs. Whately—most kind, but full of religious anxiety about me. Oh bitter Superstition!

Received from J— M—, by the Post, a little copy of Hoyle's Games. M. Anne and I attempted to play Ecarté after dinner. I was very ill, but laughed a good deal.

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17th.

*The Fools and Clowns of Shakspeare.*

*Lear.*—"That thou hast sought to make us break our vows,
(Which we durst never yet,) and, with strained pride,
To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear."——

A remarkable trait in the character of a rash, obstinate man, who, unable to flatter himself in regard to his judgment, mistakes his unconquerable will for fortitude.—"Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm."

Shakspeare has expressed his own conception of the character of Lear. Act I. Scene 1. (*Gon.*) "He always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off, appears too grossly." (*Reg.*) "'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself." (*Gon.*) "The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash: then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition, but, therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them."——But my principal object at present is

*The Fool.*

Act I. Scene 4.—(*Kent.*) "This is not altogether fool, my lord."—"Dr. Fuller, speaking of the Court-jester, remarks, that it is an office, which none but he that hath wit can perform, and none but he that wants it will perform."—Douce, Dissert. on Clowns and Fools.

The wit of Lear's Fool is very rich. But after all, what is its main source? Affection to his master: a strong perception of his master's injudicious conduct, and a warm attachment to Cordelia, who was kind to him. Such a character appears to me very natural, and the wit it exhibits, perfectly consistent with the

silliness, the levity, the want of self-respect essential to the Fool. The king's protection gives him boldness, and his practical knowledge of wisdom in others, expressed in vulgar sayings and proverbs, produces the contrast required for the ludicrous. Compare Sancho.—

"Prythee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie, I would fain learn to lie."

This is another leading feature of this admirable Fool. He might have been moved by affection to flatter his master, and maintain he had acted, if not wisely, yet with unbounded generosity; but "he had not learnt to lie." Nevertheless he is far from triumphing over his master: he only suggests the simple truth. It is the Fool who first raises in Lear's mind the distracting thought, (Scene V. Act 1,) "I did her wrong."

Admirable observations (Scene IV. Act 2,) in the answer to Kent's question: "How chance the king comes with so small a train?" Yet consistent with the character of the individual Fool.

Act III. Scene 2. The Fool becomes tragical without changing character.

*Lear.* "Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy?
Art cold? . . . .
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That 's sorry yet for thee."

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At the end of Scene 6, Act III., Kent says to the Fool, "Come, help to bear thy master; thou must not

stay behind." But the Fool never appears again. It has been suggested that Lear's words, "And my poor fool is hang'd," are literally applied to the Fool. But nothing can be more groundless. These words are said while examining the body of Cordelia:

> "No, no, no life:
> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
> And thou no breath at all?"

It is absurd to suppose that Lear could be thinking of the Fool. "Fool," as it is observed in all editions, was a word of endearment. It meant innocent, unoffending.

Is Falstaff to be classed with the Fools?—The question seems strange: but it is well-grounded.—Falstaff is Prince Henry's "all licensed fool." He stands at the head of the class, *Satirical* fools. He is the true *Momus* of civilized life: he laughs and makes us laugh at the most solemn things,—at honour, at authority, at love, at virtue: he is a Mephistophiles. But why has he not a diabolical character?—Because he acts from the most unaffected humour; not from system. His object is mirth, not vice. The treatment he receives at the hands of the young king, his former associate and familiar, is odious. The fear of censure must have misguided Shakspeare's good-nature and judgment. Falstaff should have been made comfortable for the rest of his life. With money at hand for his *sack* he would have ceased to do mischief, and continued to break his jokes to his last

moment. He ought not to have been made to die broken-hearted.

Falstaff's playful satire has himself for the principal scope. Who can be angry with a man so thoroughly convinced of his own worthlessness, and who, in spite of this discouraging conviction, hates nobody, and is totally free from malignity? But the most amusing touch in the character, is his almost sincere persuasion, that he is in himself good, but has unfortunately been spoilt by others. (See his own picture in the scene of mock judgment.) "Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal.—God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing."

*Two Gentlemen of Verona.*—How are Speed and Launce to be classed—both clowns, but without a very decided character? Launce is a simpleton—a caricature of sentimentality. The only object in the introduction of such personages was the amusement of the vulgar.—In Launce there is a consciousness of his own folly: he laughs at himself. Act III. Scene 1. "I am but a fool, look you; and yet I have the wit to think, my master is a kind of knave."—The great resource is, "your old vice still; mistake the word."—*Ib.*.

*Twelfth Night, or What you Will.*—Examine and compare Sir Toby Belch, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Malvolio, Fabian and Clown:—Sir Toby is not to be classed with the clowns and fools: nor is Sir Andrew: they are both satirical caricatures, which contrast admirably.

January 18th.

Examined a considerable portion of the Poor Man's Preservative, and was convinced that it cannot be made useful. I wrote it in a state of surrender to Church prejudices. It is a mawkish production, of which I feel ashamed.

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20th.

Began a little work, *Plain Dialogues on Religion*; * but was extremely fatigued. The Motto to the Dialogues is to be—

"I only speak right on;
I tell you that which you yourselves do know."
*Jul. Cæs.* Act III.

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22nd.

Slept better, but got up very ill. Mr. Burnett brought me a parcel of letters from Seville, Cadiz, and Madrid: i. e. from my brother, Lista, and Reynoso. Oh, for the world of the departed,—how vehemently I long to be in it! Few men enjoy more love and tenderness on the part of their early friends than myself. Yet this only adds to my pain.

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*To Professor Powell.*

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
Jan. 28th, 1840.

My dear B. Powell,

Do you know any *desperate* bachelor, a good Mathematician, who might prefer his liberty to being *perpetual*, i. e.

[* See Appendix.]

eternal Curate? If he will submit to the condemnation of all the Bench of Bishops, and become Professor of Mathematics at the College lately translated from York to Manchester, I believe that, *upon your recommendation*, he might obtain that place, with a salary of from £200 to £250, with leave to have private pupils. He might give out that he wished to go as a Missionary *in partes infidelium*. Answer me with as little delay as possible.

I have been, and am still, suffering from rheumatism, in addition to my other miseries. I write in haste, else I would add a few words for your wife. I am in hopes of seeing you all when you pass through this for Dublin. I hope to gain the heart of your little daughter.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. Blanco White.

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February 2nd.

A very restless night. Rose from bed in great distress, to which I gave vent by writing a Spanish sonnet. I myself did not believe, in former times, that actual distress could inspire verse.

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8th.

Wrote a little in the Dialogues.

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Monday, 10th.

The Queen's Wedding. May Heaven bless it to this country!

(*Written about the time of the Ceremony.*)

In proud array Britannia's youthful Queen
Asking from Cantuar. leave to love is seen.
Behind the clerk, with looks demure, but sly,
Cupid, from the lawned priest appears to shy;

Yet, blowing with swelled cheeks, from his small nook,
Turns the wrong page of the Magician's book:
Then with a titter, as he takes his flight,
Says to the Priest—"Will you dispute my might?
Behold, in gorgeous state the royal bride
Shows she's thy Mistress, e'en at your Altar's side;
But soon, by Hymen guided to my own,
Low at my feet she will lay down her crown."

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14th.

Very convulsed in the morning. Ferdinand's first letter arrived, which excited me still more.

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Feb. 18, 1840.

*The Gloom of the prevalent Christianity.*

Soon after the appearance of that modified Judaism and Philosophy which obtained the name of Christianity, the melancholy state of the Roman world, combining with the enthusiastic notions of a future world, in which happiness is to be obtained by sacrificing that of the present, absolutely made pure joy to fade, wither, and die. There is nothing like it among us. Pleasure constantly assumes the appearance of Sin—a word which perverts every mind among us. The Hebrews had a sounder notion of the state of man upon earth. See the opinions and sentiments expressed in the books of Solomon. But our Divines give him the lie, and by dint of annotations make him say the opposite of his meaning. Oh, I am sick to death of Divines!

*Communicated by Rev. William Bevan, Secretary to the Liverpool Anti-Slavery Society.*

"At a Meeting of the Committee of the Liverpool Anti-Slavery Society, held on Wednesday Morning, Feb. 19, 1840,

"John Cropper, Jun., Esq., in the Chair,

"It was unanimously resolved,

"That the Rev. Joseph Blanco White be elected an Honorary Member of this Committee."

*Answer.*

Dear Sir,

I have read your communication of this date with an interest which partakes of deep emotion. In my earliest youth I frequently thought on the horrible injustice with which the civilized nations of Europe and America treated the unfortunate Africans, and both in conversation and in writing I have ever since endeavoured to raise sympathy in their favour. I remember to have written a book in Spanish, which was published by the African Institution for circulation in Spain, and so powerfully affected was I while collecting the heart-rending facts of which I intended to make use, in order to move the compassion of my countrymen, that the pages of my MS. were actually stained with my tears. Years have passed, during which a miserable state of health has prevented my assisting the friends of the Slaves in their benevolent labours, though my heart has always been with them. It gives me therefore the greatest pleasure to find that my name is not unknown to the Committee of the Liverpool Anti-Slavery Society. Their kind acknowledgment of my past exertions excites my sincerest gratitude. I only lament that I am quite useless. But if my pen can be of any service, either in English or Spanish, I hope the Committee will suggest to me some way or other in which I might devote it once more to the cause of the injured Slaves.

Accept my best thanks for the friendly expressions of your letter, and believe me, dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully and sincerely,

J. B. W.

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Sunday, Feb. 23rd.

The night tolerable: the morning miserable. At about two in the afternoon a flow of blood ran down the left nostril. It continued without interruption for four hours.

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25th.

Weak and miserable; the head in a state which seems to threaten a determination of blood whenever the mind is actively employed, as in writing.

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*To Miss L——.*

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
March 4th, 1840.

My dear Miss L——,

I have had very lately an attack of blood to my head, which does not allow me to think deeply upon any subject; but I will nevertheless give you a few general thoughts on what you say in your last letter. Were your mind free from the prejudices of an orthodox education, you would soon settle the question in which you are involved. Your only safety lies in *strict method*. You must try to convince yourself that whatever conclusions you arrive at in a fair examination of religion, you cannot be guilty in the eyes of God. This must become an habitual conviction; else you cannot have any peace of mind. You must, on the other hand, exclude all *mere* feeling from your examination. You must not allow any weight whatever to the consideration of *comfort* as arising from belief. We do not look for *comfort*,

but for truth. If we obtain truth, we may be sure we shall not be made unhappy by it. Unless you have courage to proceed in this way, you will not find rest to your soul. The mass of early prejudice which you have still to eradicate is very great. I do not speak of *you* in particular, but of all who are brought up in the mental mould of a Church.

I am sorry I cannot offer you my services in procuring a copy of Salvador. I continue fixed to a chair, and incapable of standing on my feet for a moment. The booksellers here, as every where else, do not like to deal in foreign books. I have entirely given up the attempt of getting books from abroad.

There are many minds engaged in the same inquiries as yourself. The time is come when all *Church-Christianity* must be swept off.

Ever yours sincerely,
JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

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March 7th.

Acute pain in the left shoulder and arm,—kept me awake in great suffering. I am wretched.

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March 9th.

Much pain in the arm during the day,—and still more in the night.

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March 10th.

It is necessary to be acquainted with the cheerfulness and benevolent simplicity of heart of my old and most valuable friend, the Rev. William Bishop, to enjoy the spirit of the following playful verses,

occasioned by his delight in the new system of Postage, and my recommendation of Blundell's palm-wax candles. But I will not deprive myself of the pleasure of seeing these lines again: I will not let them perish, though many may charge me with preserving a trifle which the author did not intend to live more than one day.

O worthy, worthy Rowland Hill!
For thee my glass I freely fill,
In honour of thy name.
Then take my penny and my sheet—
The triumph is, at length, complete,
A nation owns thy claim.

And worthy, worthy Blanco White!
Of Blundell thou hast spoken right;
To him reflection calm
For wicks, the merit which display
Unsnuff'd of changing night to day,
Grants the prophetic palm!

It is curious that I composed an answer in verse while dressing myself, and wrote them in the beginning of a letter which I sent immediately to the post. In the mean time, I tore a bit of paper where the verses were written in pencil: so I have lost them; not a great loss indeed; for besides the poor character of the poetry, I wrote under a mistake. I thought Bishop had said, "thou honest Blanco White," and I made this the point of the epigram; but it is "worthy." Here, however, are the fragments of my composition, which put together runs thus:—

Yes, I will so be called: 'tis now my right
To be far known as "honest Blanco White."
Titles of honour monarchs can bestow,
Because what honour is, they best *may* know.
Fountains of honour they 're supposed to be,
Oft dry themselves, a solemn mockery,
But honesty 's thy realm, my worthy friend,
Where all but rebels to thy judgment bend.

March 14th.

For several days I have done nothing, but poring over musical chords.

March 18th.

Night as usual: very ill in the morning. Received, through the post, a pamphlet against Apostolical Succession, by the Rev. Henry Acton, of Exeter. As I first read hastily the title of the pamphlet, I felt quite alarmed at the idea that the Bishop of Exeter intended to set a member of his clergy upon me, for the purpose of conversion.*

[* The following letter from his former pupil, the late Rev. E. T. Daniell, shows that his old coadjutor in the Roman Catholic controversy still retained his friendly feelings towards him.]

77, Park Street, Grosvenor Square,
March 19th, 1835.

My dear Mr. Blanco White,

It is so long since I wrote to you, or heard from you, that I am very anxious to see your handwriting again, as well as to favour you with a sight of mine. You may or you may not know that I am fixed in London, and that I am assistant minister of St. Mark's Chapel, North Audley Street. You have, I think, in former days, fiddled with "*my master*," Mr. Allen Cooper, a very good man, who lets me go pretty well my own way, (I mean that he does not quarrel with my doctrine,) and whose cure is so satisfactory, that I have taken unfurnished lodg-

March 23rd.

Wrote to Dr. Arnott about the *Sanatorium*.

ings, and furnished them for myself (as above), with a view of remaining there till I get something better.

I accidentally met Dr. Mayo last night, who informed me, to my surprise, that you had *taken a house* in Liverpool. I had heard from the Seniors of your being there, but they were silent on the motive of your visit, and I did not know till last night of your being permanently fixed elsewhere than in the Archbishop's Palace. You may, therefore, in your present comparative solitude, not mind seeing an old friend's "fist," and at all events I shall be delighted to hear again from you. Your "having *taken a house*" sounds very awful. Don't think me either impertinently curious or officious, but what can be the attraction at Liverpool? Senior told me, some weeks back, he was anxious to have you with him again, and I am sure that my lodging, such as it is, would be always at your service as a London room, and I should be too glad to renew my friendship, and profit again by your society. But what there can be to keep you in that land of steam-engines, ships, and railroads, puzzles me. However, "all tastes are to be respected." How our circumstances change in a few years, nay, even months! I thought you firmly fixed in a comfortable family for life, and I find you in a house of your own, by yourself. You, probably, thought I was haranguing the ploughboys in Norfolk, and you find me among the Dons of Grosvenor Square, and having to preach (as I must) next Wednesday at St. George's, Hanover Square. I wish you would come and give me some assistance. By the bye, there is one little difficulty I have had to encounter since I came to London, viz. the reading the Athanasian Creed. On mature deliberation I determined on resistance, neither did I read it on Christmas Day. Easter Day is coming, and I mean still to persevere; but then some of the meddlers in the parish will be sure to write to the Bishop, and I mean in that case to consent to read, provided I am allowed to *preach on it the same morning*. As we have a different congregation in the evening from the morning, I am determined that I will not allow them to go away imagining me as hearty as themselves in damning all who do not agree in the "definitions following." I wish you were at hand to give me advice. You will at all events confer a great kindness if you will write to me, stating to me how your health is, and whether there is any chance of my seeing you. I am writing now at the Athenæum, and there is a Big Wig (Philpots) sitting opposite to me. I wish I dare screw up courage to ask him for a frank: but as he is now more

March 26th.

Received, by the post, from Mr. Allen, a copy of my Spanish work on the Slave-Trade.

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March 28th.

Very much distressed in mind and body, all owing to my bodily sufferings.

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March 29th.

A letter from Dr. Arnott, promising to let me know when the arrangements of the Sanatorium are likely to be completed.

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April 8th.

A letter from Ferdinand. He is at the camp of Kurachu, in Scinde, fourteen days sailing from Bombay.

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*From Dr. Channing.*

Boston, April 13th, 1840.

My dear Sir,

I wrote you some time ago, and though I have received no answer, write you again, as you have given me reason to

than a "*Very*" Reverend, I dare not *thus* scrape his acquaintance. But I will try:—You see I have succeeded. "He begged especially to thank me for having given him an opportunity of sending to you his warmest regards, and to tell you how glad he would be to hear from you. He had neglected during a course of time writing to you, for particular reasons, now at an end, and he would be delighted to have you tell him as much about yourself as you can and will."—I have, as nearly as possible, repeated his words, and now, my dear sir, with the same message from myself (*mutatis mutandis*), believe me ever,

Yours most sincerely,
E. T. DANIELL.

think, that a letter from a friend is some alleviation of your sufferings. I fear from your silence, that the relief which had been given you when I last heard from you has been withdrawn. If so, I must believe that the gratitude and trust which it inspired have prepared you to resign it. What a privilege have you enjoyed amidst your protracted pains in the power of fixing your mind on the highest objects of thought. In reading Fenelon a day or two ago, I met with the doctrine, that suffering, by being viewed as the Will of God, may be *loved* and borne without a desire to remove it. Fenelon was honest, and it would seem from him and other mystics, that the power of the devout mind to transmute pain is very great. I suppose the examples of this power given in the Catholic books of Saints are exaggerations, but must have some ground. I take pleasure in reading their triumphs of mind over body, their manifestations of spiritual energy, though I must confess they are too often deformed by some excess.

I sent you a discourse, which I hope you received, occasioned by the death of Dr. Follen. He was one of my dearest friends, and I cannot hope to replace him. Perhaps I have never known so true a friend of freedom, of the Right. He took part in the ill-advised revolutionary movements of Germany, (after Napoleon's fall,) occasioned by the refusal of the Sovereigns to redeem their pledge of new constitutions to the people who had restored them. Though little more than twenty years old, his disinterestedness, courage, ability, placed him among the principal leaders. He was compelled to take refuge in Switzerland, where he was again and again demanded by the Holy Alliance. He at length found safety here, but not the reward due to his loyalty to freedom. In obedience to his highest convictions of duty, he joined the Anti-slavery Society, which you know has been persecuted in the free states, because of the irritation excited by it in the slave states, and by this act made himself unpopular, and obstructed his success in life. We were not

worthy of such a man. He lived, not prosperous, yet greatly blessed in domestic life, and cheered by his own magnanimous spirit,—and died to receive acknowledgments of his worth which should have been granted in life. He suffered for his principles, and yet in his case I can see that virtue was its own great reward.

I suppose your thoughts turn often on Spain. Is not that country a case of *singular Demoralization*? It is a singular fact, that Spain and her American colonies, through their late revolutionary movements, have not produced one great leader, unless Bolivar is an exception. How happens this? In France, England and America, revolutions have been fruitful of great men. Why not in Spain? Is not the cause to be found in a singular corruption which throws uncertainty over the future? Has not the revolutionary movement in Spain and her colonies been more systematically bloody than elsewhere? Of this I am not sure; but connecting what I have heard on this point with the history of her conquests of South America, I should think Spain more marked by cruelty than other countries; and if so, is not the cause to be found in her bigotry, fierce intolerance, which embodied itself in the Inquisition?

In a late letter I spoke to you of the Unitarian body in this country as having partaken the common indifference in regard to slavery, and as wanting the spirit of progress. As to the last point, I should have spoken with greater restraint. There are in the body individuals dissatisfied with the present, and anxious for higher manifestations of the truth and spirit of Christianity. The ministers deserve one great praise. They seem to me as a body, remarkable for integrity, for the absence of intrigue, for superiority to all artifice. I think Unitarianism is administered among us with more zeal, earnestness, and will be more fruitful, though I expect no great reform until Christianity is rescued from errors, mists, corruptions, which have so long obscured and impaired it.

I have written a long letter, not for an answer, but in the hope of administering a moment's pleasure.

With sincere respect, your Friend,

WM. E. CHANNING.

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April 15th.

As feverish as usual, and with great pain, though the weather is very fine and warm. M. Anne went early to the great mysteries of sin-cleansing, and *Theophagia*. Oh, miserable mortals! Mrs. Lawrence left at the door her first rose of this year.

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April 20th.

Very ill; much fever in the night; wretchedly ill in the morning. A letter from Baden Powell, to say that they intend to be here to-morrow afternoon.

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April 21st.

Having got up as usual, I felt incapable of sitting, and went to bed again. At half-past four, Baden Powell and his excellent wife, whom I had not seen since I left Dublin, came to see me, on their way to Dublin. I was miserably affected by the meeting, and in my weakness cried like a child. I was not able to have any conversation, especially as Mrs. Powell was as much affected as myself. Dr. Sutherland happened to call when the Powells were here, and made their personal acquaintance. It is curious

that Mrs. Powell, then Miss Pope, introduced Dr. Sutherland by letter to me, at the request of a friend of hers; a most happy event for me, for he has been a most sincere friend, as well as attentive physician, during my long, long illness.

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April 23rd.

A new cage was bought for the bird, and he seemed to be more alive in it than in the old one.

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April 25th.

A melancholy exhibition of the morally perverting influence of Orthodoxy. I have this day received a letter, of which the following is a copy.

My dear Sir,

You will be glad to hear that I am elected at Oriel. I fear that you must have thought it strange, nay, ungrateful, that I have not written to you lately. At the same time you may guess the cause. *I have been afraid* to do it. I am very young, and though you may wish not to influence others, you cannot help doing it; in fact, I never feel more perplexed than when I have been with you, and it cannot be right for me, so unprepared, to expose myself to what I do feel so dangerous. Believe me still, my dear Sir,

Your sincerely attached young friend.

I will not mention *gratitude*, to which this good young man alludes. I never did anything in my life for the *sake of gratitude*; but I confess that the withdrawing of an affection, which I have deserved,

is very painful to me. Accidentally, indeed, but most zealously, did I employ myself in promoting the welfare of ———, whose great talents I discovered when he was yet a boy. All has succeeded, very much to his credit, for he has been indefatigable as a student, and perfectly correct in his conduct. What he has obtained, he deserves; but were it not for my good luck in having had various means of assisting him, his talents would not have been cultivated.

But see the result of his fanaticism. He will not see me, he scarcely ventures to write to me, though I never touched upon any religious subjects, either when speaking with, or writing to him. My only advice has been—do not give yourself up to a party till you have prepared yourself to judge. *He is afraid of me*; i. e. my very existence is to him a source of perplexity. He is *unprepared* to meet so dangerous a man. What preparation does he mean?—I know it; a considerable degree of hardening against the affection he had for me; an increase of such prejudices as will make me appear a spiritual monster in his eyes: that will remove his perplexity.—He is *unprepared,* and yet he forms a most intimate alliance with the Puseyite party, as if that choice did not require any preparation.—I confess that this result, though long foreseen by me, has given me much pain. There is no moral *poison* equal to Orthodoxy.

May 1st.

Accident has brought me acquainted within the last three or four days, with a work of great religious importance—*Salvador,* Jésus-Christ et sa doctrine: Histoire de la naissance de l'Eglise, de son organisation et de ses progrès pendant le premier siècle, 2 vols. 18mo. Bruxelles. This title engaged my attention in a Catalogue of French books, which a French bookseller in this town lent me previous to his going abroad with commissions for purchases. My greediness of books made me forget all considerations of economy, and *Salvador* came among a lot of works which tantalize me into a kind of mental fever.

I remember that many years ago I had seen a French pamphlet at Holland House, which it was said had raised considerable attention. I heard it was written by a Jew, and some recollection of the name seemed to revive in me, when now I saw the word *Salvador.* I was right: the publication in question is among the list of the author's works; though at present it forms a chapter of his *Histoire des institutions de Moïse,* under the title *Procès de Jésus-Christ.* I have asked for a copy of that book, the publication of which very properly preceded the one I am reading. What I have already seen, makes me expect great profit from the rest.

*Salvador,* I conjecture, is a Jew, the French descendant of a Spanish Jewish family. Their name must have been JOSHUA, which, for the sake of safety, they probably translated into the Spanish word *Sal-*

*vador*. A few accidental statements in the preface lead me further to think that J. Salvador is a physician, and that he studied at Montpellier. I cannot find the name in either of my two *Conversations-Lexikons*.

Just at the time when Strauss was employed in his examination of the Life of Jesus, and Gförer devoted all his mind to the study of the Talmud, in reference to the Gospels, Salvador had devoted himself to a profound inquiry of the law of Moses, and the Rabbins, as a means of examining the authenticity and origin of the Gospels. In the Preface he acknowledges his unacquaintance with Strauss, till it was too late to compare its individual results with those of Salvador himself. The general view he takes of the *Leben Jesu* is not quite correct. *Salvador* represents the two final results as totally opposite. Strauss, according to our author, rejects the authenticity of the Gospels, and reduces Jesus to *l'idée symbolique de l'humanité*. He (Salvador) believes the Gospels to be genuine, and Jesus Christ's history true upon the whole, though he puts miracles out of the question. Now, I conceive that Salvador has not read Strauss attentively. The *ideal* he speaks of is not Strauss's view, but Kant's. He quotes it at length, and declares it insufficient. In point of authenticity, I believe Salvador does not use the word *authentic* in the sense required by the present subject. No well-instructed person doubts that the three first Gospels especially were written in Judea, by Jews, very near the time

of Jesus. What Strauss in my opinion demonstrates, is, that those documents (not including the Gospel of John) are not the writings of the immediate disciples of Christ, nor the testimony of eye-witnesses. This I believe is Salvador's opinion, for he considers these documents as made up of the traditions of those times in Judea.

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*To Dr. Channing.*

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
May 15th, 1840.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of the 13th April last came to my hands only yesterday evening. Your conjecture is perfectly right; increase of suffering has hitherto prevented my writing to you. A most distressing pain at the top of the left shoulder has almost filled the measure of my endurance for a very long time. Nevertheless when I received your last, but one, letter, I entered a note of its principal topics, that I might notice them whenever I should be able to write. But a miserable want of mental energy has been incessantly growing upon me, which gives me a distaste for philosophical discussion. For a long time I have scarcely been able to feel interest in any book. One of the earliest and most permanent tastes of my life—Music—has been the only relief I have found. Not being able to rise from my chair, and having my hands constantly swollen to a certain degree, practical music, in which I had always found amusement, has long ceased to afford it: and I content myself with the examination of some theoretical Works, by the side of my Piano Forte. Thus I have dreamt away many months. Far however from forgetting that I owed you a letter, as well as my best thanks for your two excellent Discourses on Dr. Follen, and on the Labouring Classes, I

had requested my excellent friend Mr. Thom to write to you in my name. But he is so full of business, that though desirous, both on my own and his account, to fulfil my commission, he has hitherto been obliged to postpone it. Your letter, nevertheless, gave me such an impulse yesterday evening that I resolved to write to you without delay.

I have frequently meditated on the large portion of Truth which the doctrines of the mystics contain. No one, I believe, who has dwelt upon the notion of virtue will deny, that the constant desire of doing the will of God is of its very essence. This view in different language, has been that of the best stoics, and most judicious philosophers. They have declared that such a practical conformity of will is the only way of being *free*: resistance is slavery. From this, to taking pleasure in whatever God allots to us, the distance is not great. I cannot say that I ever felt that kind of *sensitive* pleasure, which I believe is the effect of enthusiasm, but one thing I can assert, if it were possible to deliver myself from suffering by a capricious act of the Will, and not according to the established laws of the Universe, (I include the Laws of the moral World, &c.,) which to me have always seemed identical with the will of God, and its best Index, I would not exert that wanton power.

I see the paper filling up rapidly, and yet I have said very little of the crowd of thoughts which your letter has brought upon me. The subject of Spain is as melancholy as it is vast. When I came to this country more than thirty years ago, I declared that Spain would produce no great Man. Most people scouted me on that account. But my conviction was deep and immoveable. The ground of that conviction was my intimate knowledge of the country. I had found *sincerity*, straightforward *veracity*, nowhere in my unfortunate country; and where such virtues do not exist, where people do not venture to show themselves as they are, great men cannot appear. The Church and the Inquisition had established a universal system of dissimu-

lation, which ruined the finest natural characters. I do not know whether Spain and its former Colonies will ever outgrow their present contempt of moral principle, their incredulity as to the existence of virtue. As they are, they may produce here and there a flash of civilization or refinement; but they will not rise in moral character.

I must conclude with a mention of Dr. Follen. Though I had never known him, yet the account of his death filled me with sorrow. As to your Discourse, I can assure you I could not read it without tears. The remembrance of such a man will always be dear and venerable to me.

I now must take leave of you. I have written in pain; but as I knew that if I broke off it would be more difficult to proceed, I have urged myself on to the end.

Believe me, with much esteem and respect,

Your attached Friend,

J. Blanco White.

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May 19th, Tuesday.

A miserable night. I feel altogether much worse. Very ill. Mrs. Rathbone called just after my dinner, and urged me very kindly to go to Green Bank for a fortnight. I had considered the subject very attentively, and found such an attempt very rash. It would only put me out of my long-settled accommodations, and occasion a great deal of bustle, which must be gone through again in a few days; exposing myself all the time to the sharp and stormy air of Liverpool, which after a confinement of about four years, must make a very severe impression upon me, increasing probably my sufferings, and not killing me.

May 20th.

A very feverish night; very ill in the morning. Informed my housekeeper, that I intend to move into lodgings as soon as I should find a convenient suite of rooms, and break up this little establishment.

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June 4th.

The Moores on their way to Scotland spent half-an-hour with me.—I am suffering from increased rheumatism, and headache which is uncommon with me.

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5th.

Wrote to Mrs. Whately.—I have read during the last two or three weeks the principal works concerning Napoleon, which were written at St. Helena. My indignation against the dastardly creatures who tortured him to death is very high.

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June 6th.

I cannot read anything that presents to my mind the existing wickedness of society; I feel as if it were pressing directly upon me, and fall into transient, but painful, dreams, in which for a moment I feel identified with the sufferers.

July 11th.

My wretched Birth-day: sixty-five years old,—without a place of rest to die in.*

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12th.

Pain in the neck growing violent.

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I am reading Lamartine's "Voyage en Orient." It is a book abounding in beauties of style and sentiment, but involved in the mistiness of a devotion which it is scarcely possible not to suspect of affectation. Lamartine is one of the post-revolutionary French Catholics. Their creed, if they can be said to have any, is quite heretical: had Rome the power, she would make an *Auto da Fe* of this new sect. Their Christianity is not founded on a firm belief of the inspiration of the Scriptures, nor, much less, in that of the Church. It is only a wilful encouragement of such feelings, imbibed in early life, as are able to silence severe thought upon the most important points of religious philosophy. Lamartine indulges a childish dreamingness upon all views which, being perfectly untenable when rationally examined, are nevertheless agreeable to his feelings and habits. In this manner he maintains the utility of prayer

[* He was giving up his house, and had made some unsuccessful attempts to procure lodgings in the country.]

with an extravagance that almost equals that of our Methodists. He is fond of the Mahometans, because, to use the ridiculous language of our saints, they are a "prayer-loving people." I am in doubt whether these poetical christians can do any indirect good—direct, is entirely out of the question.

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14th.

My spirits have been better for the last two days. Nothing could exceed the gloom that has oppressed my mind for a considerable time.

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July 17th.

I am reading regularly and attentively Mr. Prescott's History of Ferdinand and Isabella. It is a historical composition of sterling merit, full of instruction most critically collected, and enlivened with a vast variety of interesting and splendid scenes. Yet this work raises in me the most melancholy feelings. The triumph of the Spaniards is to me the triumph of evil. Wo! to the best interests of humanity in proportion as Spain gains ascendancy! Mahometanism is an enemy to mental improvement; but its opposition cannot be permanent. Catholicism is the great bane of the civilized world. Its mischievous influence is great in proportion to the appearance of refinement which the Catholic Church can assume. Its true spirit is barbarous, as may be

seen in the characters both of the Spanish King and Queen. Ferdinand's natural severity was turned into cruelty; Isabella's kindness was extinguished by Catholic zeal.—Happy it was for the world that the grandeur of the Spanish Monarchy was transient; and lamentable it is that it still has any power.

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*From Dr. Channing.*

July 21st, 1840.

My dear Sir,

I was grateful to you for your letter of May, received a short time since, and yet I could not but regret, that you had made a painful effort. I write you, not to lay you under the least obligation to reply, but because you have expressed an interest in my letters. I feel, that you have a right to any alleviation of your sufferings I can give. Your experience differs from mine, for I have had little acute pain. I do not know that I ever suggested to you a fancy which has sometimes come into my head. I have thought, that by analyzing a pain, I have been able to find an element of pleasure in it. I have thought too that by looking a pain fully in the face and comprehending it, I have diminished its intensity. Distinct perception, instead of aggravating, decreases evil. This I have found when reading accounts of terrible accidents which have at first made me shudder. By taking them to pieces, and conceiving each part distinctly, I have been able to think of them calmly, and to feel that I too could pass through them. Sympathy increases by the process, but not fear. The sympathy weakens the personal fear; but this is not the whole explanation. The soul, by resisting the first shudder, and by placing itself near the terrible through an act of the will, puts forth energies which reveal it to itself,

and make it conscious of something within, mightier than suffering. The power of distinct knowledge in giving courage, I have never seen insisted on, and yet it is a part of my experience. The unknown, the vague, the dark, what imagination invests with infinity,—this terrifies—and the remark applies not to physical evils, but to all others.

You speak in your letter of the relief you have found in music. Have you met a very curious book, "the Correspondence of a child with Goethe"? Her name was Bettini. I fell in with the work on a journey, and ran through it, omitting a good deal. It interested me as a psychologist, for it gives quite a new specimen of mind. A good deal in it relates to music, much of which I could not understand, and much which sounded like extravagance,—but I felt that there was a truth at bottom, and I wanted to understand more. I am no musician, and want a good ear, and yet I am conscious of a power in music which I want words to describe. It touches chords, reaches depths, in the soul, which lie beyond all other influences,—extends my consciousness, and has sometimes given me a pleasure which I may have found in nothing else. Nothing in my experience is more mysterious, more inexplicable. An instinct has always led men to transfer it to Heaven, and I suspect, the Christian under its power has often attained to a singular consciousness of his immortality.—Facts of this nature make me feel, what an infinite mystery our nature is, and how little our books of science reveal it to us.

I was gratified in reading in the Christian Teacher an article on the Midsummer Night's Dream from your pen. You there speak of Don Quixote.—That work has never produced its full effect on me, on account of my deep interest in the hero, which makes me indignant at the contumelious treatment he receives. I sympathise with and venerate the knight too much to laugh at him, and wish to join him in discomfiting his assailants. Was the author

aware of his work at the moment of beginning it? His first delineation of Quixote is that of a madman: you are not at all prepared for his loftiness of mind. Did not Cervantes start with the first conception, and lay out the adventures of his hero in correspondence with it—did not the nobler conception steal on him afterwards? Whether this suggestion has been made, I do not know, but the parts do not cohere in my mind. I love the Don too much to enjoy his history.

I still hope to hear that you have found relief. As I have told you, it gives me much pleasure to hear from you; but you must write only when you can find some pleasure in the exercise.

With respect, your sincere friend,

W. E. CHANNING.

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July 28th, 1840.

John xviii. 37, 38.—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.... Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again."

Here we have the representatives of two very numerous classes of men. Jesus declares his mission is to support Truth: Pilate seems to attribute little or no meaning to that name, and will not contend about it. Pilate's party is increasing very fast in our own times. There is, besides these two, another very important class—namely, the lovers of *their own* Truth. During what may be called the Church-Ages, the mass of the people were fanatically attached to the doctrines of the priesthood, and many would even sacrifice life rather than deny them. But this at-

tachment to inherited tenets cannot be called love of Truth. Faith of that kind is only selfishness disguised. All men love *their own Truth,* as they love whatever they intimately connect with themselves. The genuine friend of Truth must be ready at all times to renounce whatever he may have embraced as such, provided he finds out that he was mistaken. Whoever subscribes to a Creed, renounces all claim to the title of lover of Truth. "Are we then to be constantly changing our tenets? What a confusion will follow! Society will be always in a state of uncertainty." I answer, Why should society depend, for order and peace, on such dogmas as constitute our creeds? Let society be guided by the nature of its own elements. Study the nature of man; investigate his social principles, and make wise laws accordingly. It is very absurd that the interests of human society should depend on the doctrines of the Trinity or Transubstantiation. If you build society upon such heterogeneous principles, the results must be equally mischievous and absurd. It will be worse than when the highest interests of mankind were regulated according to the position and mutual aspects of the stars.

July 31st.

It is my intention to employ whatever mental power may still be granted to me, in compiling a brief History of the Inquisition, availing myself of the historical materials contained in the extensive work of my unfortunate friend Llorente; and en-

deavouring to add such observations as may, to a certain degree, make the composition my own.* The success of this undertaking is every way uncertain; but since I have the prospect of life (however undesirable) for some years, I will try not to throw away any portion of it which, by particular exertion, I may be able to apply usefully.

Here, however, the question occurs—Is a History of the Inquisition useful in our present circumstances? I think it may be made so. The spirit of the Inquisition is not dead: the Protestants themselves are actively fostering it, especially in England. I have already opposed this fearful tendency in my small work on Heresy and Orthodoxy; but there are few readers who can reduce general and abstract principles to practice. My little work requires the trouble of application on the part of the reader; and I fear there are not many that will take that trouble.

As the Inquisition, besides, has at all times directed its power against the progress of the human mind, the history of that Court is inseparable from the history of the progress of knowledge. The narrative of a long series of defeats endured by the noblest tendency of man—that which makes him pant after truth—is undoubtedly very melancholy; yet the unconquerable perseverance of that tendency, as it appears in its struggle against the united powers of craft and tyranny, fills the soul with an illimitable hope of daily increasing success.—If Heaven were to

[* Copious Notes were collected for this Work.]

give me the choice of a prophetic vision, to sweeten the close of my life, that I might pass from this world without perceiving the bitterness of death,—I should ask for a view of the final extinction of all dogmatic priesthoods.

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August 9th, 1840.

As, since I learned Ferdinand's determination to resign the Adjutancy, I abstained from looking into the Promotions, the Examiner had been on my table from an early hour without my turning to the leaf which contains the War Office report. I had dined alone, and was almost asleep in my chair, when, taking up the Examiner, my eye was attracted, as by a kind of fascination, to the List of Promotions. In vain did I resist. The 40th Foot fixed me, and I found Ferdinand's appointment to be Captain, by purchase, *vice Boscawen,* promoted to be Major. I was extremely agitated—a childish fear, lest the money should not be ready, deprived me of self-control for a short time. I passed a restless night, and such is my nervousness, that I am not yet at ease. But surely nothing can be more favourable than the course of events relating to Ferdinand. Why should I distrust Providence?

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10th.

A very bad night: very ill in the morning. Wrote a very nervous, silly letter to J— M—.

*To Lord Holland.*

22, Upper Stanhope-street, Liverpool,
Aug. 14th, 1840.

My dear Lord Holland,

You take so much interest in whatever concerns me, that I think I should acquaint you with my son's success in obtaining a Company in his own regiment, the 40th Foot. I found his name in the Gazette of the 6th, while I feared his promotion would not take place for a long time. He will not be aware of his appointment for many weeks, for he is in Scinde, at Kurrachee, near the mouths of the Indus, and expects to march much farther North to Cabul.—I have, besides, another reason for mentioning to you this promotion. You procured for me a munificent donation from the Queen when I was distressed, and as it might appear to you strange that under such circumstances I should have the means of purchasing a Company, I owe, both to you and myself, an explanation of this apparent inconsistency. Mr. Beck, my late father's partner, and my relation by marriage with a first-cousin of mine, was here last summer. Hearing that my son was likely to suffer the mortification of having junior officers passed over his head, most kindly offered the loan of the required money, without any security but the word and honour of my son and myself. He is to have annually a sum out of Captain White's pay, till he shall have received the amount of both principal and interest. This explains how it has been possible for us to succeed in gaining for a poor, but I trust meritorious, officer, that most important step. Excuse my prolixity in this explanation; but though you know me too well, and favour me too much to admit of suspicion in regard to my conduct, still I could not bear the remotest possibility of a doubt on such a subject.—I am very happy in consequence of this event; but it will be hard work for us to pay such a large debt. May I request you to mention this to Lady

Holland and Mr. Allen, who take so much interest in my concerns.

I am upon the whole rather better, especially since, by cupping, I was relieved from rheumatism; but I continue incapable of standing up, or moving out of my chair.

Believe me, my dear Lord Holland,
Ever sincerely and gratefully yours,
J. Blanco White.

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16th.

Drew up a paper, desiring my brother to transfer my share in Tablada* to Luke Beck.

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19th.

Mary Anne left me this morning. I regret her truly.

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28th.

Very ill the whole day, and annoyed by the noise occasioned by taking down part of the furniture. Sent my piano to my future lodgings in the country.

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*From Professor Norton.*

Cambridge (N. E.), August 31st, 1840.

My dear Sir,

It may, perhaps, give you some pleasure to be assured directly of the constant affectionate remembrance of myself and Mrs. Norton, and of the strong feeling with which we received your very kind message through Miss Park. May the God of all grace and consolation grant you support under the severe trial to which he has called you.

It has been for some time in my mind to write to you;

[* An orange grove, near Seville.]

but I was particularly led to do so to-day, by a little incident which occurred last evening. My eldest daughter showed me a letter which she had just written to a young friend, in which was a passage that I thought might interest you. I asked her to transcribe it, and have inclosed the copy.

Would it be too great an exertion, or would it be an amusement to you, to dictate to some friend a complete list of your writings. I should like much to possess it, and Miss Park would take charge of it for me.

You once mentioned a manuscript containing a view of your opinions, which you expressed some wish that I should see. Such a manuscript I should read with great interest.

I ought not to lengthen my letter. I will conclude it with expressing my firm and deep conviction that your present sufferings are conducting you to a state of existence altogether different, in which they will immediately pass away, and you will be at once restored to all your intellectual powers and capacities of enjoyment, and surrounded by objects proper for their exercise and gratification ;—and where too you will look back on a most honourable and useful life with feelings which you cannot now conceive of.

Farewell from Mrs. Norton and myself. May you continue to regard me in this life and the next as sincerely your friend,

ANDREWS NORTON.

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Wednesday, Sept. 2nd.

Left the house (Upper Stanhope Street), accompanied by Mr. Thom, and carried between three men. The rooms in the Cottage look cheerful, but I feel quite knocked up. The bird was very much frightened, though he was brought by Margaret [his ser-

vant] in a coach. The house is quiet: passed the night tolerably.

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Sept. 3rd, Carlisle Cottage, Toxteth Park.

Miserably ill upon getting up: the morning is cheerful, but I cannot easily recover what I have lost.

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6th.

Pretty good night, and better in the morning. My landlord wished to see me, and sat here some time. He is a good specimen of the better sort of English independent farmers.

---

10th.

The night feverish, or rather with a good deal of fever, and very restless. Better in the morning. Tried tea for my breakfast, after a very long abstinence from it. If the relish could always be preserved in the degree I had it, tea would produce the highest of the enjoyments through the palate.

Mr. Paget came soon after with Mr. Flower, who, I understand, is an extraordinary man, who passed the first twenty years of his life in the wilds of North America, without having learnt, it seems, to write. He is a man of athletic structure, without being heavy or clumsy; and in his conversation shows a profound understanding.

In consequence of so much talking I grew worse, so that when, near my dinner hour, Mrs. Thom came, I could hardly keep up any conversation.

Sept. 10th, 1840.

*The Scriptures in the Hands of the Church.*

I was, a few days ago, looking into the *Summa* of my old acquaintance Thomas Aquinas, to be certain that I had not forgotten the doctrines relating to saving Faith. I certainly retained an accurate recollection of those doctrines, but none of a Scripture proof, in support of the peculiar answer given to the question, "Whether the people are, by themselves, to search the articles of their Faith?" This is answered in the negative, and the conclusive reason is taken from Job i. 14, where it is said, "The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them." For, as Gregory the Great in his *Moralia* declares that the oxen are the Clergy, and the asses the people, it is evident the latter must follow the former, and feed their souls by Faith wherever their bigger guides lead them.—

Into what curious hands did God place his infallible Church!

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13th.

The night rather restless. Grew much worse in the afternoon, till I broke out into a furious fit of convulsion, with all the symptoms of a severe ague. My pulse, at one in the morning, went at the rate of 136, and the attack went off with clammy perspiration.

16th.

A restless night: increase of rheumatic pain. A self-moving chair arrived in the evening. It gives me great relief, even as a chair, besides the great advantage of being able to move about the room, as much as its small dimensions permit. It has always occurred to me that the mythological fiction of Vulcan's crutches originated in some mechanical contrivance for the relief of cripples.

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17th.

Letter from ———,* wishing to renew his correspondence with me. I answered him without delay, and with the most sincere kindness.

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21st.

Night tolerable; morning very ill. Sent for the cupper. Was cupped at six in the evening; felt immediate relief.

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22nd.

Passed a day of solitude, that is, one of those when I feel most my solitude, from want of a regular occupation, and the feeling of great fatigue when I endeavour to occupy myself. Mr. S. Martin came in the evening.

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26th.

Disturbed by violent rheumatic pains in the right shoulder.

[* See p. 184.]

Oct. 2nd.

Very bad night. The pain most violent. I fear this evil is spreading to the rest of the body. I have been trying to write with the left hand, but cannot succeed.

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Oct. 6th.

Night tolerable. A pair of crutches were sent here, to try; but the operation is too severe, and I have put it off.

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Oct. 8th.

Strong pain at different times: trying to stand on the crutches. Letter from Ferdinand from Kurrachee, Lower Scinde.

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Sunday, Oct. 11th.

A restless night; very low in the morning. Julia Moore sat with me about an hour and a half, on her way to London.

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Oct. 12th.

Margaret wheeled me out into the lobby to see the house. A letter from Professor Norton.

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Oct. 13th.

A restless night; very much convulsed in the legs. Writing a long letter to Professor Norton, Cambridge, New England.

*To Professor Norton.*

Carlisle Cottage, Whitfield-street, Park,
Liverpool, Oct. 13th, 1840.

My dear Sir,

Our friend, Mr. Thom, brought to me yesterday morning your letter of the 31st August last. As, though in much pain and exhaustion, I can still manage to write, I find it impossible to resist the desire I have of thanking you for that letter. Your kindness drew tears from my eyes. But alas! I fear I may lose, if not all, the warmth at least of that kindness. I must, however, tell you explicitly that in your controversy with Mr. Ripley you have completely excluded me from the class of *Christians*. I do not blame you for openly stating your views. I only regret that I find myself under your condemnation, without any possibility of avoiding it. Nor do I contend for a denomination which admits such a variety of definitions. But I fear that the spirit of Orthodoxy, which gradually has left me one of the most insulated men in the world, may still alienate from me one so kind, so friendly, and so enlightened as you. I confess that this fear has contributed a great deal to my silence. I would not, however, for the world keep you in ignorance of the fact, that it has long been, and still continues to be my conviction, that no *historical evidence* is sufficient to establish a miracle. This is the result of all my studies and meditations upon that subject. As it has happened to me in regard to all the other orthodox doctrines I have rejected, my convictions grew up slowly, and not without a feeling of regret; but what could I do? It is a fact, and I must abide the consequences. Having obtained my views in the sight of God, and thrown myself upon his mercy for the errors I may have committed, I could not shrink from the result, however painful, which my avowal may bring upon me. I am, besides, convinced that till that opinion be generally adopted, the *spirit* of *Christianity* must be obstructed by

the dogmatic spirit. In consequence of this persuasion, having seen in the *Christian Examiner* (I believe) a Paper of Mr. Ripley which showed a tendency that way, I wrote to him a long letter, in the midst of pain and misery, endeavouring to urge him on in the examination of the important point he had touched upon. I think it is now about three years since I wrote to Mr. Ripley. It was to that letter I alluded. It has not been printed, and I have only an almost illegible copy. When the controversy between you and Mr. Ripley grew up to its full extent, I cannot express to you with what deep regret I read the productions to which it gave birth on both sides. The severity with which you treated the subject, seemed to recoil upon myself, and this feeling coming to embitter my other sufferings, I could not muster strength to touch upon the unfortunate question in a letter to you. I have done now what I wish I had done before. But your great kindness compels me to put you in full possession of the state of my mind. I need not add that to lose any portion of that kindness would be a source of great distress to me. I find myself quite exhausted, and must conclude with an answer to your question about my works.

In Spanish I have been a rather voluminous writer, in two periodicals, *El Español*, chiefly political, and *Las Variedades*, literary and moral, intended chiefly for the *Hispano-Americans*. It was the labour I had to undergo during the four years that the *Español* appeared, that completely ruined my health. The first of my English works was *Doblado's Letters*. The *Evidence against Catholicism* followed; then a *Letter to Butler*, which the oppressive system pursued by the English publishers has eventually suppressed, because I published it at my own expense. I have not a copy, and cannot find one, owing to the failure of my printer, who had the whole edition in his warehouse.—*A Letter on the Law of Anti-religious Libel*, published in Dublin; a shorter Letter in answer to attacks on the former;

the small work on *Heterodoxy and Orthodoxy*, of which a 2nd edition has appeared not long since, with considerable additions; some Reviews, of which I have no clear recollection. I do not remember any thing else of any consequence. I must end abruptly, leaving you to guess the cause when you look at the bottom of this page, but I cannot omit my best thanks and regards to Mrs. Norton.

Ever your most sincere and respectful friend,

J. Blanco White.

P. S.—I quite forgot *Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman*; 2 vols. 8vo, without my name.

*To Miss Norton.*

My very kind young friend,

I cannot resist the desire which your few words on *Doblado's Letters* have given me, of making your acquaintance, at least in writing. I am very old, and have been long tottering on the brink of the grave, but I preserve a heart so quick to every indication of kindness, that I look already upon you with affection. I implore God to bless you, and make you grow up in virtue and knowledge, as I confidently trust you will under your excellent parents. If any one inquires about the author of Doblado's Letters, do not doubt to tell them that he is *your friend.*

Joseph Blanco White.

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Oct. 16th.

My bird made the first attempt to sing, since he began moulting, I believe, in August.

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Oct. 17th.

Very severe pain repeatedly in the night; great dizziness and nausea in the morning. Mr. Thom brought me the life of Dr. Paulus from Dr. Brabant.

*Justification.*

I often have found myself agreeing with the free-inquiring divines of Germany, in the most unprepared and unexpected manner. I am reading Dr. Paulus's Account of Himself (Skizzen aus meiner Bildungs-und-Lebens-Geschichte), which Dr. Brabant has had the goodness to lend me. In that interesting and instructive narrative, I am gratified to find many points of similarity between the temper of my own mind and the moral characteristics of Dr. Paulus. But I find, also, a perfect agreement in some leading views which I have opened to myself. In endeavouring to extricate the foundation of morals from the great difficulties which lie at the foundation of the common theories, I have been finally convinced, that the difference of right and wrong is only to be found in the conscience of each individual. What the conscience approves as right, after having carefully excluded all selfishness, that is right: the opposite to this is wrong. But, that we may not involve ourselves in the difficulties which the consideration of invincible ignorance, habit, enthusiasm, &c., will raise against this principle, we must carefully distinguish between conscientious morality and political morality; the two moralities do often coincide in practice and detail, but they also frequently differ. Supposing the case of Abraham to be so far historical, that his determination to offer Isaac as a victim be a fact, there is no doubt that any properly civilized society would have punished the patriarch,

or at least confined him as a dangerous enthusiast. Let us, however, take the narrative as figurative, as representing in the glaring colours of oriental metaphor, the determined purpose of Abraham to sacrifice the dearest treasure of his heart, to the supreme Will of God (a will which cannot be known but through the conscience), Abraham would truly deserve to be the model of that trust, that faith in God, which the rabbinical Jews made him. So far I have entirely coincided with Dr. Paulus. But he has gone beyond me, in the application of this principle to the Apostle Paul's theorems relating to Faith, and in the interpretation of the two leading words Πίστις (Faith) and Δικαιοσυνὴ (Righteousness). Give the name of Faith to that perfect coincidence of the will of man with the will of God, which is represented in the history of Abraham, and it is certain that *Faith* is the only ground of Justification. Here Dr. Paulus and I meet again; for supposing it possible to commit the greatest offence against social morality, under the conviction that it is a duty, the criminal (unquestionably criminal before the laws of society) is not only innocent, but positively virtuous before God. This is probably the case with many an individual of half-civilized nations. A very high civilization alone can make the *practice* of the two moralities agree. Their principle is really the same. N.B. That by the Will of God is to be understood that normal symbol of moral perfection under which we acknowledge and worship God.—See p. 97 of the *Skizzen*, Heidelberg ed. 1839.

Oct. 19th.

The sufferings I endured yesterday were horrible. I begin to fear some organic disease. I have continued worse the whole day; totally deprived of the use of the right hand.

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Oct. 20th.

A note from Dr. Sutherland, desiring me to lose 10 oz. of blood by cupping,—which was done in the evening with immediate good effect.

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Oct. 21st.

The acute pain almost gone: could play on the piano for a considerable time.

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Oct. 22nd.

As I could play a little on the piano, I amused myself with playing Fenaroli's *Partimenti.*

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I have this moment received a letter from J——— to acquaint me with the sudden death of Lord Holland. She kindly wished to prevent my learning this melancholy event through the newspapers. For thirty-two years, he has been a kind, affectionate, friend to me. Alas! it will not be easy to fill up his place in society. Mr. Studley Martin came in the evening to read to me two paragraphs in the papers, announcing the death of Lord Holland.

*To Colonel Fox.*

Carlisle Cottage, Liverpool,
Oct. 23rd, 1840.

My dear Charles,

In the midst of my sorrow I have hesitated whether by expressing it to you I should be adding to the agony of your pain. I know how greatly you must be suffering in your affectionate heart. But the sympathy of one who for thirty-two years has uninterruptedly experienced the friendship of your incomparable father, cannot be unwelcome to you under any circumstances. It is now four and twenty hours since I received the sad news, and I cannot yet suppress my tears. I could not grieve more for a dear brother. From that moment to the present I have constantly thought of you. May God allay your pain. Mention my deep sympathy to Lady Mary. How long have I been expecting to be removed from this scene of sorrow; and yet, in the midst of debility and excruciating bodily pain, I have been kept to experience this bitter loss.

Believe me with the sincerest friendship and gratitude for your long-continued kindness,

Your affectionate friend,

J. Blanco White.

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*To J——.*

Carlisle Cottage, Liverpool,
Oct. 25th, 1840.

I scarcely knew how much I loved Lord Holland. But thirty-two years of friendship had so intimately united me with that kind, benevolent, affectionate man, that his loss has inflicted a severe blow upon me. The effect of my sorrow is visible upon me. I could not stop my tears for a long time, and the least incident renewed them. I felt your kindness in softening the bitterness of the news by making it pass through your dear hand.

I enclose a letter for Ferdinand: you may guess the feelings with which I send it. But I will not say a word upon the subject. God's will be done. . . . .

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*From Colonel Fox.*

Holland House, Oct. 26th, 1840.

My dear old friend,

Your Letters to Allen and to me have much overcome us both. I cannot at this time write much, but I was pleased to see your handwriting again, though on such a subject!

We are all as well as we can hope to be; my poor mother, calm and kind; she desires me to say all that is kind, and so does my aunt and my wife. God bless you.

Yours, affectionately,

C. R. Fox.

P.S. Allen perhaps will add to this.

Dear Blanco,

I have nothing consolatory to add. Lady Holland is much overcome. To her it is the loss of every thing in this life, and though it may appear selfish, I cannot help adding that the loss is equally irreparable. I have known him for more than thirty-five years, and a kinder and better man I never knew. God bless you.

Yours,

John Allen.

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*To the Rev. J. H. Thom.*

Carlisle Cottage, Liverpool,
October 28th, 1840.

My dear Friend,

Many thanks for your Note. I have felt the loss of Lord Holland severely. The recc'lections of thirty-two

years, a considerable part of which I have spent near that excellent man, are fixed in a mind not selfish, too strongly to be controlled at will. I remember that I could not see Lord H.'s handwriting without a sudden expansion of my heart. Now, that friend is added to the long list of those whom death has snatched from me. My solitude in this world (I do not mean the absence of company) increases in a most melancholy degree. Intellectual convictions, at least with me, are powerful in the regulation of conduct; but very weak in regard to the feelings. Add to this the constant suffering of acute pain which never leaves me, except a few hours after I lose a considerable quantity of blood; add an imagination full of fears for the person I most love, who is now surrounded with dangers,—and you will understand what a task it is to keep myself under the control of Reason, and in subjection to the Will of God, as that Reason, which is Himself, prescribes. Ferdinand is in the advanced body of troops marching into the country of the insurgents. He writes in excellent spirits; so far I rejoice. He is at Sukkur, advancing to the fearful Bolan pass which is occupied by the enemy.

At vos, o Superi, et Divûm tu maxime rector
Jupiter! Arcadii, quæso, miserescite regis,
Et patrias audite preces: Si numina vestra
Incolumem Pallanta mihi, si fata reservant,
Si visurus eum vivo, et venturus in unum;
Vitam oro; patiar quemvis durare laborem.
Sin aliquem infandum casum, Fortuna, minaris;
Nunc, o nunc liceat crudelem abrumpere vitam!
Dum curæ ambiguæ, dûm spes incerta futuri,
Dum te, care puer, mea sera et sola voluptas,
Complexu teneo; gravior ne nuntius aures
Vulneret.

I am writing in pain, and yet I am writing unnecessarily. My fingers scarcely obey my will, and the fear of stretching

them, makes my characters smaller and smaller. My most sincere love to M——.

Ever your affectionate Friend,

J. Blanco White.

P.S.—I have had a few very affecting lines from Col. Fox, and Mr. Allen. I wish the Queen would make Col. Fox a nobleman, and thus place place him in his natural rank. He has now Ampthill Park, a beautiful property which Lord Ossory left him, in reversion after Lord H.'s death.

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Oct. 29th.

Applied one of the very rough horse-hair gloves to the skin; it seems to relieve me by pressing it: thus am I wearing the monkish *Cilicium*.

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Oct. 31st.

Senior (N. W.) called to see me before I had dressed. I came out to him wrapped up in a blanket. Passed the day miserably; when trying to get into bed, the chair rolled away from me, and I fell my whole length, so as to knock the floor with my head. I was stunned. Margaret heard the fall; she and Mrs. Lewis [his landlady] came in immediately, and between them I was placed on the bed, full of pain and distress.

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Nov. 1st.

In the morning I sent for a dozen leeches, and lost a very large quantity of blood.

10th.

A restless night: much pain in the morning. A letter from Henry and Louisa Bishop, urging me to accept from them £30 per annum, in order to engage a man to wait on me part of the day, and (if necessary) the whole night. Their kindness is so great that, if I wanted their assistance, I could not forgive myself denying them the satisfaction of affording it. But I do not want it. I could afford the money, at least for the present. I record this offer that it may be known to every one who may happen to look over this journal.

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13th.

In bed: my sufferings for the last two days are not to be described. Dr. Sutherland called yesterday, and prescribed a blister on the swelling in the neck. I could not move my arms without the most dreadful pain.

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16th.

Engaged Watson to wait on me from six in the afternoon to ten in the morning, at the rate of a guinea and a half per week. I have accepted from H. Bishop whatever Watson's wages may amount to, provided it does not exceed £30.

17th.

Mr. Archer applied electro-galvanism with very good effect.

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*From Professor Powell.*

Oxford, November 18th, 1840.

My dear Blanco White,

Though fully sensible how shamefully bad a correspondent I am, I will not let the accompanying parcel reach you without some slight attempt to retrieve my character, or at any rate without assuring you how glad I have been to hear of your change of abode, as I trust it may in many respects be more comfortable and beneficial to you than continuing in the former situation. I do not know your exact locality, but I remember well the pleasant appearance of the whole district towards the colony of the Yates's—who I think I understood are your near neighbours.

Things in this place do not improve. The convenient fable of "*the* Church" gains many converts, that is, professing adopters of it avowedly *as a fable*, who have not courage to avow their real doubts, or to touch upon the question of truth, and who just in the same way would be nominal Papists in Italy or Spain, or Mahometans in Turkey. In Cambridge, the election of Lord Lyndhurst by a large majority is a fair exemplification of the representative principle. Such a man as Lord Lyndhurst is the representative of the majority of Cambridge men:—*ergo*, the majority of Cambridge men are such men as Lord Lyndhurst. Thus, and in numberless similar instances, we find the Church most consistently and honestly labouring in its vocation to demonstrate the truth of its own 26th Article, that "the *evil* have oftentimes the chief ascendancy in it," &c., &c. However, I will not dwell upon these things—they are, to my

apprehension, useful as giving us occasion and incitement to uphold and promote better things as far as we can.

My little Charlotte is daily amused with the little organ you were so kind as to give her, and looks at your picture as the donor of it. As her mamma is writing to you, I leave her to speak for herself, and will merely add that I always remain

Most sincerely yours,

BADEN POWELL.

P.S.—You have probably heard of the elevation of Dr. Dickinson to the See of Meath.

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20th.

Wrote to H. and Louisa Bishop, allowing them to put £15 at Cocks'.

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*To Professor Powell.*

Liverpool, Nov. 20th, 1840.

My dear B. Powell,

I must thank you for your interesting Note; but I will not repeat the history of my calamities, which you may learn from my letter to your Wife. I fear that I have come to live near one of the Liverpool centres of Rheumatism; but there is no help.

Your description of the effects produced by the fable of the Church is perfectly correct. It is the most effectual disguise for dishonesty of all degrees. It will be hard for the true friends of Veracity to counteract the charms of that *Circe*. As to myself, with the exception of these my last agonies, I gladly say *cursum consummavi*.

I am glad of Dr. Dickinson's appointment, more for the Archbishop's sake, than for any thing he can or will do.

I am very much fatigued, so adieu, my kind, my honest friend.

Yours, ever affectionately,
J. Blanco White.

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*From Dr. Dickinson, late Bishop of Meath.*

Nov. 24th.

My dear Friend,

It was very kind indeed that you should write to me from your bed of sickness. I lament you should have suffering, but you feel God's will be done. I am called to a difficult and most responsible office. I trust and pray I may not forget its duties. I am sure you can understand both my feelings and my reasons for not dwelling on them. I have endeavoured to obtain the *Examiner*,* because you stated the sentiments to be yours. But I have failed. I must not weary you—but be assured I feel your kindness most deeply. Do oblige me by always adopting the second part of your address,—"my dear old friend." I like *that* title, but you and I look upon what preceded it, as the tinkling brass, and it need not sound in our ears.

May God bless you—if we meet not in this world, I doubt not we shall meet when sighing and sorrow shall have passed away.

Believe me, my dear and good old friend,

Yours, most cordially,
Charles Dickinson.

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25th.

A great attack of inflammation; the distress so great, that I really believed I should die in the course of a few hours.

[* In which his elevation to the Bishopric of Meath was noticed with strong approbation.]

*From Professor Norton.*

Cambridge, (near Boston,)
25th November 1840.

My dear Sir,

I feel very sensibly your kindness in writing under circumstances of so much bodily infirmity and pain, and value highly the expression of your regard. I beg you to be thoroughly assured that no difference of opinion can affect my estimate of your worth and integrity. I presumed that you would not agree with the sentiments I expressed in my Discourse and the pamphlet which followed it, and, therefore, did not send you copies of them, as I otherwise should have done, and as I might have done had you been in the vigour of life, and permitted by bodily strength fully to express your objections to them. But I have never felt a zeal for making *individual* converts, and never attempted to do so by private discussion. My opinions and the reasons for them I have given to the public, and then left them to produce what effect they might among the vast mass of other influences operating on the minds of men. I lately had occasion to express to a highly orthodox correspondent my sincere respect for his character. As regards you, every one capable of judging correctly of moral worth must feel the highest admiration for the determined conscientiousness which has guided you through life in the adoption and profession of your belief, and contemplate as an example for himself and others, the irreproachable integrity with which you have made every sacrifice that duty called for. It is the exhibition of these qualities in some of your writings, it is the laying open of your own mind in them, it is their thorough trustworthiness, which, beyond all their other merits, causes them to be among the most interesting works in English literature. Of the truth of Christianity, as a miraculous revelation from God, after having given the subject as thorough attention as was in my power, and with as little external bias upon my mind of any sort as falls to the lot of most men, I have no more doubt than of any moral truth whatever.

This conviction is the necessary foundation of my religious faith and hopes. If the want of this conviction have weakened your hopes, I should deeply regret it. I should be sorry to know that your faith was weaker than my own, that you are soon about to enter on a life of unending joy. But I should regret it as the misfortune, not as the fault of a friend; and I should at the same time remember that you are near, and I cannot be far distant from, a state where the doubts and errors as well as the sufferings of this life will end. There, perhaps, we may resume the subject on which we at present differ, though there it will cease to be a subject for discussion.

I thank you for your kindness in sending me a list of your writings. Mrs. Norton desires her affectionate remembrances to you, and joins me in the wish that you may have every alleviation and comfort your present state admits. Continue to think of me, my dear Sir, as very sincerely

Your Friend,

ANDREWS NORTON.

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28th.

A very restless night: changed my bed into the parlour. Then began a string of calls: C. Zulueta, who stayed a long time, during which Mr. Archer called; he thought the swelling in the neck looked like a carbuncle. Zulueta remained, and I talked a great deal about my Spanish fragments, which I believe he intends to conclude, according to my verbal sketch. Mrs. H. T—— came immediately after, but I feared to talk more; then Dr. Sutherland, who stayed a considerable time.

Sunday, Nov. 29th.

As miserable as Sundays are usually with me. I felt so oppressed by solitude in the afternoon, that I desired Margaret to sit in the room that I might see a human being.

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Dec. 2nd.

Desperately ill in the morning: sent for Dr. Sutherland, who sent for Mr. Archer. Gave Mr. Thom some directions, in case of my death, which I was persuaded would be occasioned by the bowels. I had written several of these directions, and gave them to him. My physicians do not think death to be at hand, but I am quite prepared.

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December 4th.

Copy of a Letter sent this day.

*To the Rev. Mr. Trew, Secretary to the African Civilization Society.*

Carlisle Cottage, Liverpool,
December 4th, 1840.

Rev. Sir,

A circular signed by you some months ago, induced me to subscribe to the African Civilization Society. You will find my name as B. White, Esq., though I wrote to my Bankers requesting them to use my proper style of *Reverend* Joseph Blanco White. When however the impulse given

to my mind by the mere title of the Society had subsided, and I had time to consider the plans proposed for the Civilization of Africa, I daily grew more and more persuaded that, in spite of the true zeal and knowledge of its acting Members, the evils of the abominable trade, far from being checked by the intended means, were likely to be increased. As an honorary Member of the Liverpool Committee, I have reflected on their resolution lately published, and perfectly agree with their views. I am perfectly aware of my total insignificance and obscurity; but my love of sincerity does not allow me to continue a Member of your Society. I write from a bed of sickness, where, after long sufferings, I feel convinced that the hand of death is on the point of relieving me. But whether I live or die, my heart will always cling to the friends of Africa, though my understanding may not approve of their measures.

I am, &c.

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*To Professor Norton.*

Carlisle Cottage, Whitfield-street, Park,
Liverpool, Dec. 15th, 1840.

My dear Sir,

Your very kind letter of the 25th ult. has reached me this morning, when, after a series of sufferings which are of daily occurrence, I am enjoying such a degree of repose as has not fallen to my lot for many weeks. During this long period of bodily torture, I have twice felt convinced that in not many hours, I should have to resign the whole of my being into the kind and safe keeping of Him from whom I derive it. I have, indeed, rejoiced in this sort of trial, because it has afforded me a strong proof that my settled convictions are not subject to the waverings of fear. Now, whatever I shall mention on this point I shall merely state as a matter of personal experience, and in no way as

applicable to controversy. I have observed in the course of the maturest years of my life, the vast variety which appears in the workings of opinions upon different characters. The mere possibility of doubting some particular doctrine will fill certain minds with terror. I myself have felt this mighty fear. I experienced it, when having taken refuge in the shallow Protestantism of a political church, I found myself beset by irresistible doubts on the doctrine of the Trinity and the Atonement.

A worthy and very kind friend, whom Nature had exempted from doubt on subjects which habit and feeling had sanctioned to him, once found me bathed in tears, lamenting that my faith had vanished without the least hope of recovering it. In spite of this weakness, the constitution of my mind made it impossible for me to stop inquiry. I examined, and often imagined I was satisfied, but my satisfaction arose from sympathy with individuals I loved, and the vain hope of continuing in unity to the end with persons whom I highly valued, and whose esteem I could not preserve unless I fully subscribed their creed. From my works, however, you must have formed some idea of my painful progress towards the full attainment of my liberty. I am free, but has truth bestowed this gift upon me? Most certainly it has, if by truth we understand the discovery and rejection of error. The Phantoms that haunted my soul have completely vanished; but what positive truth supports my moral being? One which I cannot reduce to a logical process, but which has the strongest foundation in the very essence of my soul. I am certain that God, by the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, dwells in my soul. It is there that I make my nearest approach to that ineffable Being whom I love more than life. There I have constantly found him in proportion as I have ceased to rely for hope on philosophical doctrines consecrated by Divines into dogmas. I am far from denying the existence of individual men after death,

but I should be on the other hand most miserable, if I had to fortify a belief in that doctrine by a constant search after analogies, probabilities,—and, worst of all, by Revelations depending for authority upon written documents and the interpretation of philological difficulties. Why then should I step out of the path so clearly marked out for me by Providence? I could not more firmly believe in God, I could not trust in Him with more filial confidence, were I to stand on any other foundation than that which I have found within myself. I would not, however, endeavour to force it upon others. I would certainly recommend it if I saw the usual foundations tottering; otherwise I would never disturb any one unless, misled by false zeal, he carried disturbance into the souls of others. I thank God that you, whose esteem I value most highly, do not make that esteem depend on opinions, which, however sound they may be, are totally independent of our will. I must conclude this dreamy letter; but not without thanking Mrs. Norton for her most friendly expressions of kindness toward me. Believe me, ever yours, most gratefully and sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

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*To Miss L——.*

Liverpool, Dec. 16, 1840.

My dear Miss L——,

Your letter, Berlin, 7th Dec., has reached me this morning, and I am determined to acknowledge it this day. If, in my present miserable state, I allow the impulse which a letter gives me to grow faint, I find the greatest difficulty to answer. Helped by the first impression, I do not find it very fatiguing to say a few words to a friend. You must not, however, expect any thing satisfactory on the subjects which occupy your thoughts. My strength is totally ex-

hausted by a very severe illness which, since May last, has kept me in great tortures, besides my other habitual miseries. I have just risen from my bed, which I was obliged to keep for many weeks, in consequence of a very severe rheumatism, followed by an internal attack, which twice made me believe that I could not live many hours. But it seems I am doomed to continue upon the rack of life—I can hardly give any other name to my own. I am again fixed to a chair, unable to reach a book, and very little able to read it. One satisfaction, however, I have derived from this severe trial. My expectation of death did not in the least disturb my convictions—those *negative* convictions which, for persons educated in Dogmatic Churches, are of paramount importance—the certainty that our happiness in another life cannot depend upon the acknowledgment of certain propositions. No one educated by means of a Catechism can obtain tranquillity, till he is thoroughly persuaded that religion does not consist in history, criticism, or metaphysics. You appear to me still to cling too much to the acknowledgment of certain usual assertions respecting Christ. The accuracy of such assertions depends so much upon the authenticity and interpretation of historical documents, that thinking people exhaust themselves in vain in trying to make them part and parcel of their souls—a sort of intuitive conviction which cannot proceed from such sources. It seems to me as if you were afraid of displeasing Jesus of Nazareth, by not making him the object of certain theological compliments. Give up, I would advise you, all these old prejudices. Follow God in the sanctuary of your heart, and do not harrass yourself to make out that you are a *Christian*, in spite of Divines. Be a child of God, in the spirit of Jesus Christ himself; but never believe that a certain form has been fixed, to which every soul must conform in order to be acceptable to the Father of our spirits. I believe, in my Heresy and Orthodoxy, I have thrown out thoughts which completely demonstrate the impossibility of

a peculiar revelation. The theory of such a revelation invalidates itself.

I am writing almost at random, but I feel already so exhausted, that I cannot be more methodical.

My German reading is nearly at a stand. I have not strength to pursue deep thought, especially in a language which I possess but imperfectly. It has not pleased God to allow me to visit that surprising country; it would have given me the highest pleasure to know it.

Believe me, with the most sincere esteem,

Your ever true friend,

J. Blanco White.

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21st.

The shortest day of the year, in such a climate as this, is one that should be met with rejoicings: Darkness is conquered. *Nativitas solis invicti* deserves a welcome. My night was tolerable.

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27th.

I have sadly neglected this Journal: upon the whole I have suffered less.

Dr. Sutherland wrote to Mrs. Whately about my removal from Liverpool. She answered most kindly, with a message from the Archbishop, who offers to pay all expenses. Though I had not written upon that subject, she wrote to me also. Something she said unfavourable to the plan of going to London, induced me to suggest (rather obscurely) that if they had no objection I would go to their neighbourhood

in preference. Perhaps I shall have an opportunity of explanation. The subject requires it very much.

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December 31st.*

I placed that good young man, my music-seller's shopman, in an awkward situation, owing to inadvertency and dullness of hearing. He came to settle my account, and asked me why I did not get a cover for the square Piano. Upon my inquiring the price, I thought he told me *five* shillings; but he had said twenty-five shillings. Surprised at the cheapness of the article, I ordered one, and sent for five shillings to Margaret, which I gave to him. Unable to understand that this was payment for the cover, and remembering that in my transactions with his master, he had had a great deal of trouble, he thought the five shillings were a present. Upon examining the account, I found £1. 5*s*. charged for the cover, and no entry for five shillings. Mr. Thom did me the favour to inquire about this mistake. The poor young man, when called to account for such a state of things, plainly and honestly explained the whole. He did the same to me, and wished to return the five shillings, and take back the cover. I could not hear of such a thing, and requested him not to trouble himself. The next day, however, I sent him a present of a sovereign, as a token of my confidence,

[* This is only one of a thousand characteristic instances of considerate generosity and kindness, of which he rightly made no record.]

with a note, acknowledging my blunder and his good behaviour. He is an intelligent man. His answer was that of a gentleman.

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Since I made the last entry, my sufferings have had no relief. Mr. Archer urged me to have leeches on the swelling of the neck. I had a dozen, but experienced no relief.

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And now this year of cruel pain and misery is over. The New Year begins sadly for me: the only blessing I can hope for is Death: my only prayer that it may be a gentle one. Amen.

# CHAPTER XII.

## THE RATIONALIST A-KEMPIS, OR THE RELIGIOUS SCEPTIC IN GOD'S PRESENCE.

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### THOUGHTS WRITTEN IN 1840.*

### I.

*Meditation and Prayer.*

Oh thou great Being, who, from the dawn of my reason, didst reveal thyself within my heart, to Thee I may venture to speak humbly but freely, in the sanctuary of my soul. It is *there* that I obtain the nearest approach to Thee: there alone I know Thee face to face, not in the figure of a man—not in the coloured shadows of Imagination,—but in the truly spiritual character of Knowledge, Power, Will, Consciousness. Thou hast identified me with Thee; and yet Infinitude lies between us. Thus mysteriously united and distinct, a mere thought undraws the spiritual veil of the oracle to which Thou hast consecrated me a Priest: I am instantly conscious of thy

[* These thoughts, essentially biographical, were all written in 1840, and are therefore placed here. If they are felt to interrupt the more personal interest, the reader may proceed to the next Chapter first.]

presence. No fire or thunder, no smoke weltering in the flames, no sound of the trumpet from the summit of a blazing mountain, can so surely attest that nearness. Thy "still small voice" penetrates my very essence, and I reverence Thee from the mysterious centre where my Being and my Nothingness unite. How great, how little I am! Less than dust and ashes; nobler than the morning star, by my powers of Thought;—though not a breath of Life is properly my own, yet I can confidently pour the workings of my heart into thy infinite bosom; nay, those spiritual workings which I call mine seem to proceed from Thee.—What! if in passing through me they become subject to obscurity and distortion! I will every moment refer them back to the eternal, immutable light which is their Source, and much of the distortion will cease.

Nor shall I be deterred because other men tell me that these very thoughts are grievous offences in Thy sight. To exert my mind under a vehement desire that my thoughts may conform with Thine, is the only form of worship in my power, not unworthy of Thee. Eternal Spirit! I am thy child: to trace and to increase in myself a likeness to my Father, is bliss unspeakable. This is what I would purchase with ten thousand lives: this is that which I have but one way to accomplish: a way which Thou didst show to one, who, in spite of many human imperfections, did ardently love Thee, and was frequently taught by Thee. I must, "with open face beholding

as in a glass the glory of the Lord, (be) changed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord."* Strange! that I am invited to approach thy glory with open face, and yet my fellow-creatures would abash me when I frankly manifest my thoughts to them! Oh! there are spots on this earth, on which were I to declare to men, what I do not endeavour to disguise before Thee, my life would fall a sacrifice to their indignation. Alas! this weight of misery which crushes me while I am slowly and painfully recording the thoughts I now address directly to Thee, what is it but the result of the treatment I have received from my fellow-*Christians;* my fellow countrymen, my own flesh, my dear friends? They thought Thee too remiss in avenging my freedom. Let them however be zealous for Thee in the manner most opposed to Thy dealings with me. Thy internal blessings—(may I not say *external* too?)—have been multiplied in proportion as I have gained confidence to let my soul appear before Thee, without attempting to disguise myself from myself; in proportion as I became *practically* convinced that a *lie* can under no circumstances be agreeable to Thee: that man cannot serve Thee with a *lie*. What I do at this moment is the natural and unsought-for result of the growth of my reverential openness towards Thee. It is delightful to open my heart before Thee, oh Eternal Being. Men will not bear to hear me; a very few who may have undergone the fiery prepara-

* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

tion through which I have past, may fearfully listen; and for those I record my meditations. But the madness of the mass of Zealots is such, that they will not bear another man to differ from them. Their pride is fired up at such boldness. 'Think like myself—or I will make you suffer to the whole extent of my power.'—In spite, oh God, of thy visible conduct, in spite of that divine forbearance with which Thou treatest them when they most differ from thy best-known attributes, they proclaim to the world that Thou are the most jealous and intolerant of Beings: that Thou wouldst turn thy hot anger against every one who doth not punish those within his reach, whom he chooses to call Thine enemy. I shall be to them a blasphemer. Ah! who blasphemes but he who calls Thee (oh fountain of Goodness!) jealous? No, Father! thou wilt not be jealous of such a worm as Man. Thou wouldst not be jealous if there existed a Lucifer, Son of the Morning, to be something like a rival to Thee! Thy goodness would conquer him by Love.

## II.

### *The Evil One.*

Glorious, indeed, are the mental powers with which Thou hast adorned some of thy children among men: and there was one, a highly-gifted soul, who solaced his solitude in total blindness, with sublime, though misdirected meditations, through which he imagined he had solved the mystery of Evil, and discovered its original author. Worthy indeed was his language to have disclosed that awful secret to the astonished world; but having rashly ventured beyond the clear limits which Reason—thy true inspiration—marks out, he injured the interests of Truth, by committing it to the charge of its great enemy—the Fancy. How often have I tried to quench my thirst of highest knowledge, by consulting the pages of the ultramundane Bard! But painful indeed was my disappointment when I found myself sunk into matter and sense, in proportion as my guide made me hope that he was leading me on cherub's wings to the regions of spirit and pure thought.

He conceived the source of Evil in the union of the highest intellect with the most consummate wickedness—as if all misconduct were not essentially ignorance and error. Pain, weakness, and ignorance of their true causes, are the sources of vice: so at least, O God! I understand the answers of thy oracle within me. If I have misunderstood thy answer—or if, upon that awful question, I have received none

from Thee—if I have no right to expect it, I am sure at least that the explanation which is generally made a part of the Christian creeds is absurd and contradictory. That odious chimera, called the Devil, has no power over the Creation. How strangely do men insult Thee, in their ignorance, by representing Thee as carrying on an interminable war with a rebel creature of thine, who, if not frequently victorious, does at least maintain a perpetual battle, in spite of the burning chains in which it is said Thou keepest him! He is described as highly intelligent, and conversant with the nature of things. He is said to be aware of the immutability of thy essence, of the immeasurable inferiority of his own; but, like a man subdued by passion, he takes a bitter pleasure in his own disgrace and final ruin, only to spite his enemy; —to spite an enemy who might annihilate him at any moment, and who (as it is said) allows him these imaginary advantages with a view to his confusion and his own brighter conquest. Alas! for the blindness of superstition! It is in this manner that those who call themselves thine elect, the spiritually enlightened out of all mankind, have adopted the most absurd fables of idolatry! It is thus that they undermine the principles of morality, by misrepresenting Thee, the model of all goodness. Thou, God, knowest that even children can confound their instructors, by asking why Satan, the source of Evil, if inferior to God, is allowed to exist. It is true the questioners are soon silenced; but they are

silenced at the expense of their growing sense of equity. They are told that God allows the Devil to exist for the purpose of magnifying the Divine glory; as if that glory were to arise from the applause and approbation of other Gods, and were not to be obtained at the cost of the wretches who are believed to have fallen, and to have still to fall into the eternal torments, in consequence of this fierce battle between the Lord of Goodness and the Lord of Wickedness. After this, we should not be surprised when we find the most monstrous proceedings represented as parts of Thy government.

Numerous bodies of men, calling themselves the authorized interpreters of thy written revelation, make it one of the conditions of salvation, to believe that thou, O God, hast from eternity chosen a limited number of thine intelligent creatures to be made for ever happy, for no reason whatever but that of a display of thy uncontrollable power and might; whilst an infinitely larger number have been appointed to an eternity of suffering, with a view to the same display. God of Goodness and Mercy! is it thus that these blind creatures purpose to flatter Thee?—Have they taken Thy image from the worst tyrants that have oppressed mankind? Could not thy Power be better displayed by making all thy intelligent creation happy by making them all virtuous?—

## III.

### *Free Will.*

"Impossible!" they exclaim: "God *must* give them the power of being *wicked*, else they could not be *good*. It was thus that Evil sprung up *in Heaven*. One of the brightest angels misused his *Free Will*, ruined innumerable hosts of his brethren, who ever since have infested the earth, and covered it with vice and misery. It is Free Will that maintains both the interest of Hell and of Heaven, though it greatly leans to the former."—What a surprising conception!—Who could have imagined that a Will, without motive, should be so powerful as to defy the Almighty?—"Oh! no: to assert such a thing would be blasphemy. God's Grace is infinitely more powerful than Free Will. That Grace controls it without difficulty, directs it without destroying it, and often, working upon the most rebellious irresistibly, leaves their Freedom untouched."—I will not attempt to unravel such a mass of contradictions; but it is enough that thy Power for Good remains untouched. The difficulty opposed by Free Will has vanished. Free Will is subject to thy Grace; in other words, Thy will and power to do good cannot be opposed by Man. Thou canst conquer even the most rebellious: if Thou canst, (as I firmly believe,) Thou wilt. Let the World of Mind love and praise Thee for ever!

## IV.

### *Corruption of Human Nature.*

How greatly will Love and Praise predominate over dissatisfaction and murmur, when the artificial gloom, which a corrupt religion has spread over the world, shall be dispelled by Thy internal revelation!* Who that believes the dark tragedy of the Fall of Man, and the destructive workings of Original Sin, can, at present, raise a smiling countenance to heaven? Howl and bewail, oh children of Adam! Cheerfulness and joy are equally absurd and sinful in you. Are you not doomed to perdition from the first moment of animation? Was not your existence, from its unconscious beginning, an offence against the author of all being? You are an abomination in his eyes: you are objects of his undying hatred; for you are descended from a human couple, who though made perfect by God, allowed themselves to be deceived by a serpent (which means Satan), and ven-

* A constant experience, extending from the earliest dawn of the prevalent Christianity to our own days, proves its tendency to produce a gloomy enthusiasm, when seriously made a leading rule of life. Cecilius, the character that personates the heathen in the Dialogue of Minucius Felix, entitled *Octavius*, written about A.D. 220, has drawn a general picture of the Christians, which might be taken for a portrait of the *Saints* and *Methodists*, as well among Protestants as Catholics. Vos verò suspensi interim atque solliciti honestis voluptatibus abstinetis: non spectacula visitis, non pompis interestis: convivia publica absque vobis; sacra certamina, præcerptos cibos et delibatos altaribus potus abhorretis..... pallidi, trepidi, misericordia digni..... In another place:—latebrosa et lucifuga natio, in publicum muta, in angulis garrula.

tured to eat of a fruit, which God, knowing they were not strong enough to resist the temptation, had forbidden them to touch on pain of death! What God foresaw, could not but happen; our first Parents ate of the fatal Tree. It is true that they did not die on that day, as had been threatened; but all their *future* descendants died on that very instant; or, what the Interpreters of the Bible declare to be the same, all were doomed to suffer through eternity. So doomed, we are born; so doomed, we live: can we, then, under that awful sentence, relish life for an instant?

"O, full of all subtilty and mischief (I hear them answer me), thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Wilt thou stop thine ears against the words of wisdom, which God has sent through us his servants, in explanation of what thou, most cunningly, dost involve in difficulties? True it is that we are all born children of wrath, and heirs of eternal fire: but why dost thou not disclose the wonderful remedy provided against that evil? Has not Redemption been granted? Are we not saved by the blood of Christ? Did he not hang like a male-factor, on the cross, to purchase heaven for us? Oh, wicked man! dost thou despise the blood of the Lamb, slain for us from the beginning of the world? As sin entered into the world by one man, and death through him, so that in Adam all die, do you not know that through a greater man——"

Ah, forgive my impatience, and let me finish the happy sentence—"All men are equally made spiritually alive."—So, then, there is an *Original Salvation.* As sin ruins us even when unconscious of our being, so the work of Redemption saves all, without the least chance of failure.—Thanks be to heaven! though the cause of our danger, as you explained it, was incomprehensible, and quite unsatisfactory, I will not dispute that point. Let the remedy be as universal and effectual, and I will instantly raise the hymn of joy.

"Man (I hear), thou art a mocker."—God, Thou knowest I do not mean to trifle or insult. But Thou hast given such power to thy Truth, that it reflects contempt on those who grossly offend it. In vain do men strive by anger and assumed solemnity to check that very peculiar manifestation of instinctive good sense, which, because it produces involuntary laughter, is called Ridicule. It is not true that Truth and Error, that true Reasoning, and Sophistry, that unpretending simplicity, and conscious affectation, are equally exposed to the shafts of Ridicule. As Beauty, under all circumstances, carries a halo of loveliness and dignity about it, that abashes the boldest insolence, so does Truth remain unmoved at the grimaces of mockery. Neither is it possible that sincere piety can appear ridiculous; *that* sublime sentiment is inseparable from truth and simplicity of expression. Who will laugh at the Fire-worshipper, who on discovering the first rays of the sun from a mountain top, prostrates himself to the earth, and remains for a time in silent

devotion?—No: the boldest fanatics, on the contrary, cannot silence the internal suggestions of common sense, which tell them they deserve contempt. To escape this consciousness, they raise a clamour of impiety whenever their absurd idols, mental or tangible, are closely examined by sound reason. What a monstrous picture do most divines draw of thy divine Being, my God! How unjust, odious, tyrannical, they make Thee appear, oh, model of all that is lovely, good, and beneficent! But if any one declares that, instead of the true God, those men have drawn a demon; if in a fit of just indignation, the truly pious man declares that it would be easier to submit to the empire of the commonly described Satan, than to that of such a God, they will run frantic, as if it had been asserted that Thou, oh glorious Father, wert really inferior in nature to the Devil. In vain they are told that the assertion is made only of the false image which they themselves have set up as God. Their mind is insensible to all reasoning;—"you, bold and wicked philosopher, hast made God inferior to the Devil."—But I ask them again;—*who* drew the false and detestable image on which I vent my contempt?—*He* is the blasphemer who describes God as a monster.

## V.

### *Revealed Writings.*

"To the Law and the Testimony" is their favourite appeal, as soon as Thy light within us begins to shine so pure as to make them despair of raising a cloud about it. The best chance of wranglers is a law of words. Wonderful, indeed, art Thou, oh God, in all thy manifestations, but especially in those surprising means, through which thou enablest thy rational creatures to convey in material signs the most delicate processes of their own minds. Verbal language, in its structure and powers, attests thy Deity, as much, if not more than the multitude of suns that proclaim Thee from the boundless firmament. If man derived any part of his instruction *immediately* from Thee, it must have been in the first model of articulate speech. But language, though wonderful, betrays in its imperfections that it is a derivation of the human faculties. Its foundations are *material* images. In vain do we strive against this original imperfection. A practised mind follows so rapidly a chain of analogies, that we are tempted to believe we have separated the primitive verbal sound from the sensuous image or sentiment, which first gave it currency in language. Why is it that Thou hast no Name, though the ignorant Jews believed thou hadst made a display of Grammar and Etymology in appointing one, which, after all such refinements, could not pass the lips without crime? Having for ages

been an object of superstition, affectation has revived that name among us, as a mere badge of religious party.* Men struggle in vain to give precision and certainty to language, on things that transcend the senses. We have no object to place between man and man, even when we wish to agree on the sign which is to express our best known feelings. How different must *love* be in different bosoms? Who shall compare the hatred of a Marcus Antoninus and a Nero? We must content ourselves with distant analogies: whatever requires a greater accuracy of expression we must not attempt to explain in common language.

Yet, there is a multitude of learned men who stoutly contend that, whosoever will be *saved* is firmly to believe in a long string of propositions relating to Thy glorious and immutable nature, which the acutest Logician must content himself with translating in other words, equally or more unmeaning than the original. Good God! does the essence of Christianity depend on this! Is this still believed in the middle of the 19th century!

Thy works are distinguishable by their wonderful adaptation to their objects; yet, if the narrowest human intellect had been employed in conceiving the means of establishing a religion for all mankind —a worship fitted for all times and countries—a body of doctrines able to enlighten and guide all classes of men, it could not have betrayed its incompetency for the task more evidently than by such a

* Jehovah.

conception as that of the means through which Christianity is supposed to fulfil those ends. In the first place, it announces itself as a perfect body of divine revelation,* supported by proofs which (it is affirmed) must ensure its reception, by reasonable men, of all ages and countries; but the contrivers of the system, with an ignorance of human nature scarcely pardonable in the infancy of civilization, imagine that a multitude of supernatural attestations, addressed in *narrative* to future generations, would suffice to gain a perpetual assent to this supposed message from heaven. It is almost impious to attribute to Thee, oh God of all knowledge, such ignorance of man's nature as is betrayed in this conception. Of supernatural works presented to the senses, men are not discriminating judges, until they have examined and measured the extent of the natural causes. Miracles *narrated,* provided they strike the imagination, are all equally powerful and valid for the mass of mankind. They will convince them of the truth of any religion, as it is seen all over the world.

But Miracles, in writing, unless they are made to seize the fancy of men in their infancy, will always

* It would be perhaps more correct to say that it has a decided tendency to appear as a complete body of knowledge, out of which nothing but what is mischievous can be learnt. This view has always been adopted by many Christians, and has strong partisans in our own enlightened times. Nobis curiositate opus non est post Christum Jesum, nec inquisitione post Evangelium. Cum credimus, nihil desideramus ultra credere. Hoc enim prius credimus, non esse, quod ultra credere debemus. Tertul. De Præscr. Hæret. c. 7. *Gieseler*, from whom I copy this passage, refers to a great many others of similar import. See Cunningham's Translation of his Eccl. History, vol. i. § 64, p. 147, Note 2.

dissatisfy the thinking mind: even where they are true they will be unlike the best known truths—they will be *unlikely*. Even the testimony of eye-witnesses, delivered directly by them, under the reasonable precautions of a cross-examination, would be unable to bear the weight of their *inverisimilitude*. This *inverisimilitude* increases as our knowledge improves, till there arrives a time when nothing short of the most artificial preparation—a preparation which would secure followers to any, the most absurd belief,—can supply the supposed all-convincing religion with professors whose intellect and instruction may be above vulgarity, or whose sincerity may be above suspicion.—This cannot be thy work, O God! I declare it with the utmost conviction, and with the profoundest reverence. The idea within my bosom which proves to me Thy existence, rejects with irresistible power every thing attributed to Thee which contradicts its essence. I would reject the evidence of my senses attesting a miracle, and *much sooner* the testimony of another man, if it tended to invalidate such first principles of thought or experience. If there could be a moral fault in such a disbelief, it would be chargeable to some fault of my mental constitution; the author of our mental constitution would be responsible for the disbelief of the ablest and best men.*—Thou alone, O Father of my soul, knowest the deep and long anguish into which the

* The utmost sophistry has been employed in trying to invalidate Hume's well known argument. I have had it before me for many years, during which the conviction of its unanswerableness has unin-

common doctrines have plunged my soul during the best part of my life. Thou knowest that I would, at any cost, have purchased the power of believing whatever was believed by the various classes of Christians with which thy Providence has successively united me. But in the same proportion as study, reflection, and a sense of duty narrowed my profession of faith, in that proportion was the number of my friends reduced. Places where I had been acceptable were at once closed against me. The proud and contemptuous eye of the prosperous and highly-rewarded believer sent bitterness and indignation into my heart at every turn. Thou knowest that I do speak the truth. Thou must have judged between their insolence and my humbled soul. As one who had stained his honour by the most shameful deeds, so had I to retire from place to place. It seemed as if offended virtue pursued me. And why? What did the world wish from me?—To tell a bold lie? To say that I had found conviction where, the more I examined, the less soundness appeared?

terruptedly increased. If the object of proof is to produce conviction, the *narrative of a miracle attested by written documents* can never have that effect. The miracle might be true, yet no one could rationally believe it. It is surprising how much more consistent the old Catholic Divines were found upon such points than the modern Protestants. The schoolmen were aware that the *Faith* their Church demanded could not be trusted to argument. To believe the miracles themselves, was, according to the Doctors of the old Church, another miracle, the work of supernatural grace. This is arbitrary and absurd, but consistent. The system of saving Faith grounded on arguments is a flimsy work.

Would this conduct have saved me all the horrible sufferings which, in one shape or other, devour daily my heart—the sufferings which crowd around me at the very brink of my grave? Would a most dishonest falsehood restore me the friends who, in my exile—(that first bereavement which my want of conformity inflicted upon me)—had made me forget my early losses?—Yes, yes! speak a Lie,—degrade, dishonour thyself, mock the God of Truth, and their doors will fly open! Alas, alas! could any system be devised with greater powers to corrupt and degrade, than that which is attributed to thee, O my God, as the only means of saving mankind!—But here they answer—'What can we do? We have children whose souls are dearer to us than our lives: shall we allow them to grow more and more attached to a man who denies the first principles of the Christian revelation? Will they not lose a proper horror for doctrines professed by one whom they love dearly, one whom they highly respect?'—Oh, blindness! If, as it cannot be denied, whatever good that man possesses is a gift of God, why should you prevent your children from witnessing God's conduct towards a human being under those very circumstances which you believe raise God's highest indignation? Why should you stop your children's eyes, that they may not see the practical falsehood of the assertion, that without belief in certain abstract dogmas, Christian virtues are impossible?—Dear, dear friends, I know that God will forgive your error. As to myself, I do not feel

that I have any thing to forgive, though I have much, very much, to weep for in my inmost heart. These, these are the evils, the permission of which astound the reflecting mind. Here it is that the genuine Faith in God—that Faith which originates in the deepest feeling of his goodness and wisdom—is absolutely wanted. Faith in Churches and their articles may support a slavish acquiescencè, as unworthy of rational beings as it is of the Infinite Wisdom to which it is offered. But what can mere authority avail, when its foundations, equity and wisdom, seem invalidated by fact? The soul must cling to those internal manifestations of thy goodness, O God! which, being in perfect harmony with the moral essence of our soul, make it vibrate in unison with Thee, and render us deaf to the accidental dissonances and clangors of this world.

## VI.

*Disguised Selfishness supported by Perverted Religion.*

It is not the perverseness and corruption of the human heart that occasion our greatest evils. Let no lover of true philosophy be misled by the formidable appearance of the angry passions; they are the most easily opposed and kept within bounds; the evils they produce carry their antidote in the alarm they occasion. Our most inveterate evils are those which assume a mild appearance. What remedy can be conceived for cruelty inflicted in the name of brotherly love? Oh! let me fall into the hands of the savage, who, by devouring my quivering limbs, believes he is fulfilling a filial, brotherly, or national duty; who fiercely tells me he is my bitter enemy; but save me from the Christian priest, who speaks of nothing but love and charity; who indulges a refined selfishness by applying with one hand the lighted torch to the wood prepared to melt my limbs, and wiping with the other the luxurious tears of a sympathy, without which a spark of compassion might spring up in his heart and smite it. It is sacerdotal Christianity—the Christianity of Priests—it is that treacherous mixture of whatever is worst in superstition with almost every thing that is good and lovely —it is that *worst* corruption of the *Best*,* which oppresses the moral world at this moment.

* All forms of Christianity claim to themselves, as if they were an indivisible unity, whatever is best in every moral system. Now if this

Wherever any Church-form of Christianity is established, that most important study—Morality—is neglected; or, if attended to, is carried on under insuperable prejudices. The belief in the divine authority of any doctrines connected with any science whatever, is incompatible with the progress, and consequently with the perfection of that science. What thou, O Divine Light, that shinest in my understanding, hast shown me concerning the nature of the Faculties, to which thy rays are directed, is enough to convince me that Thou hast never mixed two such inconsistent methods of educating mankind, as that of absolute, incontrovertible assertion, and gradual inferential discovery. With the sincerest conviction, and profoundest reverence, I acknowledge the unlimited extent of Thy power, but I also know that Thou art the Law to thyself—that thy Nature is incapable of contradiction. What Thou art, thou canst not cease to be; and although it is true that our knowledge of Thee is very limited, we yet are thoroughly aware of certain facts which thy works discover. In none of thy works, however, can we perceive more distinctly what thy Nature is than in our intellectual faculties, because none of thy works

claim means a purpose to adopt whatever is best, Christianity would be a most admirable moral eclecticism. I believe that Jesus saw it in this light, and still more distinctly the same view appears to have crossed the mind of Paul. But from early times we find this *intentional* feature of the religion assumed as historical: this assumption continues to this day. Ὅσα οὖν παρὰ πᾶσι καλῶς εἴρηται, ἡμῶν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐστί. (Justin Mart. Apol. ii. c. 13.) In this manner it is easy to claim perfection to any system.

can so nearly be examined by ourselves. When, therefore, I clearly find that man, by the nature of his faculties, is forbidden to know anything whatever but what he *discovers*, or traces out step by step, I cannot for a moment doubt that the supposition of an authoritative revelation from Thee, *on points of doctrine*, originates in gross ignorance both of thee and of ourselves. What could such a revelation convey, which should not be intimately connected with thy Universe, that infinite *whole*, which is but one connected Thought of Thine? Shall we conceive a detached portion of that Infinite, limited between a distinct beginning and as distinct an end, suited to the exact measure of an *Edict* of *Instruction*, to be for ever adopted by all the generations of men? Oh miserable application of man's pedagogic notions, such as they exist during the first and faintest glimmerings of knowledge! We experience even at this day the hard and heavy shackles which the incidental mention made in the Bible (that pretended infallible depository of all knowledge) of a few misconceived facts connected with physical science, has laid upon the most enlightened part of the World.—And how could this great evil be avoided if revealed authority were employed in the intellectual instruction of mankind? We should constantly find ourselves involved in the evils of a contest between the law of gradual development established by Thee within our souls, and that of peremptory declaration implied in the fixed and immutable verbal lessons of thy messengers of in-

struction. At whatever period the *Message* were sent, it must either have taken every branch of knowledge at precisely the point of development where it found itself at that time; and of course it would reveal nothing, improve nothing: or it must have displayed at once, and without preparation, knowledge which was to be the ripened fruit of centenaries of years. Let the Oracle command the Sun to stand still, and Astronomy will have also to stop its course; let the instructing prophet, adapting his language to future knowledge, say, "Earth, stop thy rotatory motion," and the pupils will mock the heavenly teacher.—This will happen, though in a less degree, with the more important knowledge of ourselves; but though the errors will be fewer in number, they will also be more out of the reach of remedy. The progress of science has nearly banished the physical errors of the Bible; but the moral mistakes committed by the supposed infallible law-giver of the Jews maintain their ground with insuperable obstinacy. Usury is still treated as a crime, and the slave-owners cling to the *texts* of the Old Testament, and the silent admissions of the New.

This evil is still more fatal when the errors are found in the leading principles of morality. To be virtuous for the sake of reward, is a contradiction. He alone is virtuous who loves virtue for its own sake. To consider this life as a hazardous game, where our only business is to secure never-ending happiness, and to avoid never-ending suffering, is

a degrading view, as unworthy of Thee, unfathomable fountain of goodness, as it is narrowing and oppressive to feeble and timid man. It is a great mistake, to endeavour to fill the imagination with horrible images of physical evil, in order to raise the mind to spiritual perfection. Never were the moral views of man more obscured, disturbed and perverted, than when our present life was represented as a most imperfect and dangerous state of existence—a grievous disease which threatened eternal misery, and had no other antidote or remedy, than the most deliberate opposition to what the laws of nature demand for our comfort, and for the relief of evils which seem inseparable from this our progress through time and space. To take such a view as the guide of moral conduct, is to invite enthusiasm to be the regulator of human virtue. The whole history of Christianity attests the truth of this observation. For many centuries all ardent Christians acted exactly as if the foundation of the Gospel was a firm belief in the Dualism of the Deity, and the necessity of an incessant war between the Good and the Evil God, wherein it behoved the true Christian to oppose the material world as the work and dominion of the Devil. The system of mortification, and of ascetic practices which is still deliberately professed more or less by Catholics and Protestants, clearly proves that the original error still remains undispelled. Among a vast proportion of Christians, self-inflicted pain of all kinds is believed to be by itself pleasing to Thee.

Thou, oh God, who art the free-giver of all good, who hast covered the earth with blessings, whose regulating laws of growth and life make a state of habitual comfort a necessary attendant on a healthy organization,—*Thou* art supposed to be pleased by the wilful application of means which debilitate our health, and diminish not only our bodily, but our mental powers! It is true that the laws of our organization lead us to moderation in the use of strong and exhausting pleasures; but this, instead of teaching us penance and mortification, instructs us to avoid pain, and to economise pleasure. This most important lesson is proclaimed by the voice of Nature—the Nature of which Thou art the sole author. But to tell us that pain and misery are the only price which can purchase future happiness at thy hands, is a monstrous misrepresentation of thy character: it is a refined calumny against Thee. If, indeed, Thou hast a most powerful rival and opponent in the Devil; if he delights in our misery, and Thou in our true happiness, it must be concluded that Satan is the author of whatever is productive of pleasure, of health, vigour and cheerfulness to Man, and Thou the source of every thing that can make life odious, and which converts the grave into man's refuge. Yet people who believe this monstrous position think themselves *pious*.

Nor is this all the mischief which false religious principles cause in the system of morals. Virtue is not only made gloomy and anti-social from connect-

ing it with pain as its necessary condition; but being deprived of its natural reward, peace and heartfelt joy, its view is turned towards a future crown of glory, which, when connected with active enthusiasm, renders the expectant a dangerous madman, and when left to a wavering belief, becomes a source of anxiety, under the most trying circumstances of life. Distracted by the uncertainties and contradictions of an existence into which every one is called by an irresistible power, the reflecting man who conceives a hope of relief and support from the popular religion is fearfully deceived. There is no comfort, no support in the Christianity of Churches or parties, but for those who cease to think, and give themselves up to a heated imagination and morbid feeling. The Catholic who firmly believes in the absolving power of his Church, and never indulges in thought, easily allays all fears connected with the invisible world. Is there a priest at hand to bestow absolution at the last moment of life, he is sure of a place in Heaven, however sharp the burnings may be which are appointed for him in Purgatory. But alas! for the sensitive, the consistent, the delicate mind, that takes the infallible Church for its refuge! That Church offers indeed certainty in everything that concerns our souls: but Thou, God, who hast witnessed my misery and that of my nearest relations—my mother and my two sisters, knowest that the promised certainty is a bitter mockery. The Catholic pledges of spiritual safety are the most agonizing sources of doubt. Be-

fore the progress of thy divine Light, which we call Reason, had forced the Catholic Clergy to remove from their dogmas the most offensive stains of gross ignorance which those dogmas contracted in ages of total darkness—before the keepers of those dogmas employed their ingenuity in giving them some appearance of reasonableness, few among a laity half barbarous would allow their reason to disturb them in the use of the charms offered to them for their comfort. The Sacraments intended for pardon of sins could not (according to the common notions) fail in producing the desired effect. For, if, as was subsequently given out, all those divinely-instituted Rites demanded such a spiritual state in the recipient, as without any external addition would produce the desired effect, what advantage would be offered to the believer? If absolution demanded true repentance to deliver from sin, this was leaving the sinner exactly in the same condition as he was in before even the name of the pretended Sacrament of Penance was heard of in the world. But, if these conditions alone can give security, no thinking person, and especially no anxious timid person, can find certainty in the use of the Sacraments. And none but the naturally bold and confident do find it. To these the Sacraments, instead of being means of virtue, are encouragements of vice and iniquity. Oh God! if Thou couldst hate anything thou hast made, what weight of indignation would have fallen upon a Constantine, and an Alva! And yet the former having

put off baptism till the last opportunity of sinning should be on the point of vanishing with the last breath of life, declares the heavenly happiness which filled his soul from the moment he came out of the baptismal water: the latter, that cold-blooded butcher of thousands, declares that he dies without the least remorse. On the other hand, have I not seen the most innocent among Thy worshippers live and die in a maddening fear of Hell! They trembled at the Sacraments themselves, lest, from want of a fit preparation, they should increase their spiritual danger.—Away, away with the Priestly deceits! "Away," repeats the Protestant enthusiast, "Faith alone can save: Faith alone can give peace to the soul."

## VII.

### *Protestant Saving Faith.*

What is that Faith which saves?—Much as I have endeavoured to understand the meaning of the Protestants, I have not been able to obtain a clearer notion than this: "Saving Faith is an unhesitating belief that we are saved by the blood of Christ."—This, translated into intelligible language, means: Saving Faith is a belief that we are saved according to a certain theological theory. The next step in this important inquiry is,—how is a man to fulfil this most important condition? The answer is, that it is not in the power of man to acquire it: it is a miraculous gift of heaven. With this answer, the system of Predestination is almost inseparably connected. Treating Thee, O eternal Father, as they would a capricious tyrant of the East, they address Thee in the language of the most irrational and degraded servility. They say, Man is clay and thou the Potter, and carry on the absurd comparison between an unconscious plastic substance, and an active, lofty spirit, analogous, if not similar, to Thee: they would stop, by the insulting question, "Who art thou, Man?" the complaints of those whom, only to "manifest thy glory," i. e. to boast of thy power, Thou hast doomed to eternal sufferings. "Who am I?" might well the insulted spirit answer, "Thou hast said it: I am A MAN. God, who gave me that dignity next to his own, if He were subject to such passions, would look down upon thee, miserable flat-

terer, with indignation and contempt. Wouldst thou secure his favour by representing him as a most odious, cruel, unfeeling tyrant, seeking his glory in the unending misery of those among his creatures who alone seem capable of unending happiness?"— How unworthy of the glorious name of Man, must those be who can thus think of their own species! But no! they are not necessarily what they appear: Fanaticism is a dreadful disease, which frequently perverts even the best minds, and produces a partial insanity.

Since I entered upon these Meditations, Paul of Tarsus has constantly stood before me. In one of his allegorizings, he left a sketch which Augustine, the African bishop who for so many centuries has been the governing despot of the Western Christians, converted into a most horrible libel against thy Deity. With what intrepid madness does he venture upon a history of thy eternal designs and decrees in regard to mankind! Thy best, thy noblest work reduced to a mass of corruption, out of which Thou wilt condescend to save some, leaving the bulk to eternal unhappiness, as not worth the trouble to save them. And why? Because Thou hadst so ordered thy moral and physical world that it depended upon Adam to make it a reproach to its Author. Oh my God, how my heart sickens when I think that at this moment such an odious, disgusting, and blasphemous system is taught and preached all over Europe! When shall this disgrace have an end; when shall

religion cast off doctrines as unworthy of Thee as even the most disgusting fables of heathenism? Thou knowest, my Father, that I do not wish to indulge in invective or declamation: I speak what I find in my heart: I speak it in Thy immediate presence, under the strongest conviction that the doctrines I condemn, far from being derived from Thee, are contradictory of thy Divine Being.

## VIII.

### *Redemption.*

How could the theological fable to which that name is given, become for a multitude of feeling minds, the most striking representation of Thy divine Love? But here human Reason (at least, in a considerable number of individuals) has been so bewildered, that it is impossible to tell whether the source of that Love is one or more than one: whether the principal personage in that ultra-mundane tragedy is a severe unyielding Fate, who has, in a great degree, been superseded by the generous self-sacrifice of another Being more deserving our worship and affection. Is it thou, Eternal Father, who hast died for Man? The Priesthood, who call themselves the infallible interpreters of the never-erring Scriptures, have declared it most heretically sinful to say so.*—No: Thou hast not courted the sympathy of mankind in that manner. It was thy Son, who died. What! the Son of God? another God?—No: no: one and the same God.—And yet HE, that one God, died, and did not die.—O shame of Christianity, O absurd philosophy, to the acceptance of which our favour with God, our salvation, is said to be attached! Who can bear the shadow of the metaphysical cloud of Essences, Persons, Hypostases, Circum-incessions, or Inter-penetrations of these three persons who are one God? Is it to mock Reason, thy best gift, that thy Gospel was published in the world!

* N.B.—The heresy of the Patripassians.

No, my God, it is not thy Gospel, thy "Good Tidings;" it is a bewildering and bewildered dream of African fanatics. Africa and Egypt are the native soils of church theology. But, how has that strange dream obtained such an extensive acceptance among nations so different in mental character from the inventors of these wild systems?—*From that characteristic difference itself.* It is the northern and western austerity and love of definite fact, that has reduced metaphor to history, and condensed cloudy images into colossal, massive statues. Thou knowest, O God, the almost unconquerable tendency of mankind to fly from Thee to their own works, the idols of their hands or their imagination. They want a God "after their own image, in their own likeness;"* a God that generates and produces out of his own '*substance.*' This tendency developed itself gradually, till a feverish imagination gave it the present definite shape, pretending to publish the events of Eternity, the secret transactions of the invisible court of Heaven, which have decided the fate of mankind. Forgive me if I repeat the offensive Tale.—

God,—of course Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—

* Serapion was an Egyptian monk, a friend of the famous Antony the Abbot, who firmly believed that God had a body. Some of his *learned* friends persuaded him that this was an error. Cassian, who relates the story, tells us that this orthodox lesson very much distressed and disturbed him, so that with great simplicity he used to exclaim:—Heu me miserum! Tulerunt a me Deum meum, et quem teneam non habeo, vel quem adorem aut interpellem jam nescio. See Gibbon, chap. xlvii.

decreed to make Man, and made him perfect. Having to contend, however, with a certain Fatality, which God seems obliged to respect, he allowed the first Man to ruin himself and all his posterity. This fall was the consequence of another failure in God's still nobler work, the Angels. Here arose a wonderful difficulty. God (it seems, the Father,—though Father, Son and Holy Ghost are only *one* God) could pardon neither Adam nor any of his descendants, unless He (God) received a payment, a ransom in blood of infinite value. The value of blood, except to the being whose life depends upon it, is not easy to determine. In this point of view, every individual's blood is of infinite value to himself, but not to others. God must therefore have his own blood as a ransom for Man—but God has no blood. Here, however, an *admirable* contrivance, so it is called, was resorted to. Let God be made Man, and He will have blood: let him then shed his blood as a sacrifice to himself, and He will have the infinite price required. Now, owing to some mysterious difficulty, the Triune God could not become Man; and yet it is not easy to say how, without dividing the Deity, this acquisition of blood, and its surrender, could take place. The *Son*, nevertheless, was the appointed victim,—he became Man, without ceasing to be God, i. e. to say, he became finite, without ceasing to be infinite; weak, without ceasing to be omnipotent;—and so on. In this state, he died at the hands of Men. This *Deicide*, however, reconciled God with the offending

race; the blood of God, his Son, became a most acceptable sacrifice to the Father, so that for the sake of that blood, the Triune God is willing to forget and forgive not only the guilt of Adam, but the individual offences of his descendants.*

So strangely art Thou, my God, misrepresented to thy rational creatures. It is said that thy Mercy could not act, unless the most holy and innocent Being fell a sacrifice to thy Justice. Nothing but an act of the greatest *injustice* could enable thee to be merciful. Divine Justice must be satisfied; it must have suffering—blood, blood, blood is its call. Such Justice would be a fit attribute of that supreme Evil Being, who lurks, as it were, behind the scenes of this tragedy. And indeed it is more intelligible that the *natural* claims of the Evil Being should compel the Good one to such a sacrifice, than that the only God should be compelled to sacrifice his own Deity, made man, to himself. And yet this is the great

* Many traces of ignorance and false philosophy betray the human origin of these pretended Revelations; but nothing proves this so clearly to me as the constant confusion of *moral* and *physical* objects, which is found in these theories. So, in original sin, moral guilt corrupts the physical nature of man; in the method of redemption, physical blood washes away sin. But this mixture is nowhere more evident than in the Myth of the Incarnation. Nature is almost upset in order to avoid a supposed physical impurity, attached to the usual mode of generation. The man-god, who is to be produced, must not have a Father, though it is not against his dignity to have a mother. Had the inventor known anatomy and physiology, a female ovum might have been placed in some aërial receptacle, and miraculously nourished, or made to grow at once. But these extremely pure subjects will not bear much handling. Nothing is more indelicate than false delicacy.

mystery of Love, for a multitude of Christians. That thy innocent Son died a cruel death, is their greatest comfort and delight. His blood washes out their sins: by that blood they are rescued from the flames of Hell! Oh vileness! oh gross selfishness! to be in raptures because an innocent person has suffered for them! But even if this disregard for everything, except personal safety, were excusable, with what feelings must they look upon that Deity, or person of the Deity, whose nature is the cause of this dreadful sacrifice! To the Father is this fatal severity generally attributed—the Holy Ghost remains without a distinct employment in this drama. But if the nature of the Father is such, how can he continue an object, I will not say of *love*, but of reverence to the believers in this narrative? No: all they can feel towards the head and fountain of the Deity (so the Father is called) is fear: glad indeed do such people feel that they have the Son to fly to for protection. So indeed it must be; for it is evident that in this horrid Mythology such minds as venture to seek for distinctness, waver between the Father and the Evil Principle, when they attempt to explain the *necessity* of the sacrifice.

I speak the truth before Thee, oh my misrepresented God! Thou knowest with what unbounded submission I wish to act towards Thee; with what profound reverence I look upon the resolves of thy Wisdom; but, in obedience to the tendencies of my mind, which I can most clearly trace to Thee, I

would not choose for myself that method of salvation on which the followers of the Christian Priesthood trust. I will trust in no contrivance, in no *purchase*. Thou art my Father, I am Thine by nature, not by contract. Accept my imperfect love! I know Thou wilt!

## IX.

### *Spirituality.**

"For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."† Alas! for the world if it had to become Christian only according to this view. Such are the notions which have made Christianity a *disease* for millions of human beings since its publication to this day. A horror of our body, and the laws by which it is produced and preserved, a mortal fear of visible nature, a very developed notion, or rather a positive assertion that it belongs to the Devil, and the

* There is great difference between a *spiritual* and an *intellectual* world to come: the first has its origin in the *imagination*, the second, in the *understanding*: the former is grounded upon the more than doubtful theory of the distinction, or rather *opposition*, between matter and spirit, the latter stands upon the *fact* of our intelligence. The vague pictures of a heaven, or the world of spirits, from which *matter* is to be excluded, is an abortion of imagination, acted upon by an absurd philosophy. Not so the *intellectual* world, or the ultimate result of the actual world in which Providence works constantly by certain laws. By the study of those laws, but especially by the constant observation of the laws under which human nature acts, we may not only prophesy a world to come, infinitely more perfect and happy than the present, but we may also contribute to the approximation of that happy period. But a world of happiness which is to arise like the phœnix out of the ashes of the present, is a fanatical vision which may disprove any revelation, but which no revelation can prove.

† Ephesians iii. 20, 21.

belief that life is an evil, and pleasure the mortal enemy of virtue,—these horrible impressions filled the world with fanatics, and are still the curse of civilized society. Men are distracted by the perpetual clashing of the *two* worlds between which they are said to be placed, and between the two *selves* which contend for their notice and care. Heaven and earth, body and soul, keep a perpetual struggle in the breast. Man is thus rendered a contradictory being. He is made to believe that there exists a privileged portion of space, where the highest happiness prevails, a happiness for the greatest part sensuous, else the resurrection of the body would not have been made essential in the doctrine of Heaven. "This vile body" is to be transformed into a thin, aerial body, which owing to this ethereal nature, it is absurdly supposed, may not sicken, decay nor die. As the gross and vile body is the impediment to our translation to the region of the glorious body, it is with difficulty that the ardent believer can be kept from self-destruction,—from shaking off this mass of corruption; but at all events it must be his duty to assist the sources of its decay—"to mortify the body." History is full of the most disgusting details produced by these doctrines; and every day exhibits their still existing activity. Catholics and Protestants become more or less diseased in mind as they take these notions to heart. Were it not indeed, that Thou, my God, showest thy great Power in the power of the Laws of the visible world, the deep enthusiasm which is mixed up with this

Christianity would have destroyed society, and reduced it to hordes of frantic savages.*

What can equal the absurdity of rejecting Thy self-evident revelation made to every man both by the visible world out of us, and by the intellectual world within us? Is it not the grossest superstition to seek for infallible knowledge in the conjectural interpretation of ancient writings exposed to all the difficulties of proving their authenticity—to imagine that the interpretation of long dead languages, of expressions full of allusions to a social state of things totally removed from our notions and habits—in a word, that the uncertain guidance of early history and modern criticism, is appointed to us by Thee, our ever-present, immutable Parent and Guide, in preference to, in exclusion of, that glorious book of Nature which Thou keepest daily open before the eyes of all men; that book where people of all times, nations and languages are able to read lessons perfectly intelligible to every one, who will look for light, not among Priests, those pretended depositaries of Thy Will, but in the Sanctuary of his own conscience, where thy divine instructions are heard?

Thou, my God, hast appointed to me a life of pain, but I remember always with gratitude, the opportunities which, in the midst of sufferings, and even through their instrumentality, Thou hast given me to emerge from that abyss of corruption, ignorance and

* Let the history of Monachism be fairly studied.

superstition into which I was plunged at my birth. I can never forget the pure and elevating enjoyments which I owe to the will and power Thou didst bestow upon me, to acquire such knowledge as is indispensable to study mankind in its noblest intellectual productions. Year by year, as the early darkness which the most mischievous and artful of Priesthoods spread over my unsuspecting mind, has been dispelled, my astonishment has increased when I discovered the multitude of frauds by which those who become learned only for the purpose of supporting the system of the Church which *supports them,* have calumniated human nature. History has been most shamefully perverted in order to darken the moral picture of antiquity, and to make the world the dwelling of virtue in proportion as nations were forced, deceived or bribed into submission to the Christian Priesthood. But how false is the picture they have drawn! How inferior are the virtues of monastic Christendom, to the noble spirit which ancient philosophy taught her pupils!

## X.

### *Humility.*

There was (it cannot be denied) an over-proud spirit among the ancients, requiring a check, which indeed true Philosophy, Thy divine light within us, never forgot to give it. Whenever the feeling of self-respect, overstepping its right boundaries, became aggressive, and, instead of repelling insolence, practised it upon others, that state of mind was declared vicious: but the *irascible* principle of our nature was, by itself, believed to be useful like all other springs of action. When kept under the control of Reason, true Philosophy must not only allow its utility, but must also encourage it by praise. HUMILITY could not be raised to the catalogue of *virtues* except in a Society chiefly composed of men degraded by personal slavery, such as history exhibits the early Church. Slaves alone could find such a sanctified cloak for cowardice as humility; for it is not a dignified endurance of unavoidable evil, but such a cringing as may allay the anger of an insolent oppressor. Such submission cannot find acceptance in thy eyes, oh God! for it classes Thee with the despots of this earth.

Nor can I discover in those views, which may with high probability be traced to that great and good servant of Thine, Jesus of Nazareth, any authority for declaring Humility, as commonly understood, as his favourite virtue. If he ever uttered the rule of offering the cheek for a second insult, he must have

done it under the conviction that the Oriental style he was using could not be misunderstood but by idiots. He was not a man of so slavish a spirit: he knew how to reprove wanton insolence with a dignity which could not but shame and appal the aggressor. But it was the unhappy fate of Jesus's plan of religious reform to be taken up by men far inferior in every respect to the great originator. This inferiority increased with every succession of proselytes, till the great mass of the Christians was made up of the dregs of society, men born or grown up in slavery, accustomed to the lash, and unacquainted with self-respect or personal dignity. The spirit of such a society could not but be strongly inclined to servility, though apt, on the other hand, to grow outrageously insolent when circumstances invited to that behaviour. That familiarity with the lash and with every instrument of arbitrary punishment, which is inevitably joined with personal slavery, was the true preparation of the heroes of *Martyrdom*.*

* Real enthusiasm, supported by the great power of opinion in a new and comparatively small society, which neglected no method of inflaming the imagination and feelings, may have urged some minds of the better class to that sacrifice of their own lives, and much more to that danger of losing them, which was a sure foundation of corporate power, wealth and fame. But Church history, though ready to conceal any truth which did not agree with the views of the clergy, has disclosed very evidently the mean ambition, the low and degraded character, and the worldly views of these Martyrs—these *witnesses* of nothing but their own *enthusiasm*. I would not detract from the merit of any human being who, under a sincere error, endured pain or any evil for the sake of what he thought right. I feel a melancholy interest for those who, intoxicated by every means in the power of the society to which they

In the multitude of slaves who flocked to the Church is to be found the source of that *Humility* which has lowered the standard of modern virtue. Whatever might be the cause, a society which sanctified a total absence of self-respect could not produce truly virtuous men, except by contradicting its professed principles. How low must have been the tone of moral feeling in a society where Church penance was established!—where men atoned for their faults by lying prostrate at the threshold of their Churches, endeavouring to be trampled upon by the congregation; where these penitents were divided into classes, the very names of which raise a blush for human nature!* Such a body must have abounded in the most degraded wretches, while the spirit of that portion who accepted such acts of humiliation must, like that of all masters of slaves, have been nourished with a selfish, mad pride, in proportion as they had lost all respect for their own species.†

But what is *Humility*? Is it to proclaim every evil of oneself, knowing that what we assert is not

had attached themselves, fell victims to a miserable enthusiasm. But, after an attentive consideration given to this subject, I am convinced that the contrivances by which Martyrs were procured by the pious of those days, were infinitely worse than those employed among us to obtain converts from the Jews, and the class of the latter, in general, was superior to that of the former.

* The *whining*, the *kneeling*, the *tumbling*—from the manner in which these degraded creatures were ordered to implore the pardon of the congregation.

† The pride and insolence of the Clergy, their claim to be respected above the kings of the earth, are well known. I wish I could give a picture of the character of Martin of Tours.

true? Is it to deny or conceal Thy own gifts, the blessings we have received from Thee, my God? Could such falsehood, such ingratitude, be acceptable to Thee? I know how highly it behoves Man to be *modest*; how fit it is for frail and limited creatures to reject the suggestions of vanity; to compare ourselves, not with those that are evidently inferior, but with those who are undeniably above us. But to create in us a habit of distrust and timidity, is to deprive us of that confidence which is the foundation of all high enterprise. To degrade ourselves before our fellow-creatures, as an exercise of humility, is to encourage their vanity or their insolence. To address Thee as an Eastern slave would address the Despot he fears, would be a grievous insult, were it not done in perfect ignorance!

## XI.

### *Prayer.*

But I am led to examine, in Thy presence, an obscure subject, where much superstition prevails.—Thou knowest, my God, that the only source of consolation I have had in this last and most trying period of my life, is that state of mind which arises from the internal conviction that Thou dwellest within me, that Thou hast placed thy oracle in my conscience. When in the midst of torturing pain, and that cruel sense of forlornness which total want of domestic friends produces, I obtain a glimpse of that internal conviction that Thou art with me, the tempest which violent pain raises in my soul is suddenly stilled. It is long, however, since I renounced the (to me) superstitious practice of falling upon my knees, and formally addressing to Thee either praises or petitions. I am, however, almost without interruption in a praying state, if, as I conceive, prayer is a *desire** of conformity with Thy will. To ask for individual events shows a great ignorance of Thee, and of the universe in which Thou manifestest thyself to us. The order of thy universe is immutable: nothing can be but what is to be, nothing is possible but what will happen. All other suppositions are illusory—the work of our imagination, where all superstitions have their source.

Prayer is full of moral benefit, when used as a

* εὐχή.

means to remind us of Thy omnipresence and Thy paternal care. It was certainly not without Thee that the last great preacher of thy Unity, Mahomet, obliged his followers to short and frequent prayer. Much superstition was soon connected with that practice, burdensome in itself from the external forms prescribed. But the proclamation of the returning duty, made by a human voice from an elevated place, is an external act, as simple as it is sublime.* My mind suggests, that when thy Providence shall have delivered the Christians from the superstition, pride, and intolerance which prevent their moral progress, some practice similar to that of their too much despised religious rivals will be employed, instead of the injudicious methods now followed with the object of raising and maintaining devotion. A social lifting up our hearts to Thee is an act full of beauty—the privilege of rational creatures. But the absurd and

* In Spain, where the Mahometans were masters for many centuries, the Muezzin's call to prayer seems to have made such a favourable impression on the Christians, that the custom is kept up to this day, though in a very imperfect manner. A large bell is a miserable substitute for a verbal call to remember God, and worship him. At break of day, at about ten in the morning, at noon, at three in the afternoon, and at sunset, a bell is tolled for prayer, which, in the spirit of Romanism, is addressed to the Virgin Mary.—How superior, in various respects, is Islamism, to superstitious Christianity! It may shock many, but I must express my expectation, that both the corrupt Church Christianity and Islamism itself will disappear in the course of ages, and that the two religions will return to their primitive source—the pure patriarchal and primitive view, the true Christian view, of God and Man. I would recommend to all sincerely religious and thinking men to read attentively *Histoire des Institutions de Moïse et du peuple Hébreu*, par *M. Salvador*. The same author's work, *Jesus-Christ et sa Doctrine*, abounds in neglected truths and profound reflections.

mutually contradictory creeds, now considered as the essence of Christianity, interfere with that glorious Unity which thy own Unity sincerely believed will, I hope, give to thy worshippers. One class of religious men have already made an important step towards this noble end—that class, I mean, which takes its denomination from Thy essential attribute—thy Unity. They are still much impeded in their progress by inherited prejudices, especially by that worship of the Bible which has many of the effects of idolatry. As to myself, Thou knowest that I sincerely value a name which constantly reminds me that Thou art one and there is none like Thee. Are not these my desires, *Prayers*? is not the whole of this artless writing, a *Prayer*? my whole existence, with its helplessness, its misery, its anguish, its aspiration, is a Prayer—and may my last breath be a Prayer!*

* The mixture of *rationalist* with *sacerdotal* views which the New Testament exhibits is a singular phenomenon. The former, of course, could never be popular. From the earliest times, such enlightened maxims as those which we find upon Prayer are passed over without any observation, except such as tend to obscure and invalidate them by interpretation. What Divine will dwell upon the words, (Matt. vi. 7, 8,) "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do....Be not ye therefore like unto them: *for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him*"? And in spite of this passage there is still a *Litany!!*—The superstition with which the Lord's Prayer is treated has not led to the imitation of its soberness and brevity. That it is a Rabbinical composition is well known; but that origin does not diminish the merit it possesses.

## XII.

### *Christian Morals.*

"Until the end of the fourth century, those who were legally divorced were allowed to marry again, the second marriage being considered no farther objectionable than in other cases; but in the fifth century, the marriage of a divorced person was forbidden during the life of the other party. So prevalent was now the spirit of monachism, that the married state began to be considered impure, and only a tolerated evil. Certain articles of food also were forbidden.

"The introduction of such laws, for which no foundation could be shown in the consciousness (conscience?) of mankind, gave to Christian morals the aspect of an arbitrary set of divine rules; whilst it prepared the way for the unfortunate distinction between a higher kind of virtue for the monks, and a lower, which was sufficient for common Christians.

"It seems, at first sight, difficult to reconcile with this great external strictness, and yet is in fact intimately therewith connected, that we find in the Church-fathers of this age, principles concerning *veracity*, which undermine the very foundation of all true virtue." *

These observations of a man profoundly versed in the history of Christianity, and rather inclined to extenuate the faults of Christians, led my mind to Thee, my God, as is usual with me whenever the obscure purposes of thy Providence raise a cloud of difficulty over my understanding. With our narrow comprehension of this infinite WHOLE, of which we are a part, with our limited knowledge of Thee, and

* Gieseler, c. vi. § 100. *Cunningham's Translation.*

with our natural avidity to perceive the *Reason* of things so intimately connected with us, it is not surprising that men rush into vague conjecture. What is indeed astonishing is, that rational beings should be more ready to embrace absurd theories, than to endure the austerity of well-grounded doubt. Not to see wisdom, order, and purpose in the course of events, is blindness; to perceive light in the explanations of the pretended depositaries of thy Revelation, is a symptom of deranged mental vision. What conjecture shall ever explain the reason why, when the religion of the most civilized part of mankind was to be changed, thy Providence should allow the new religion to attack, without discrimination, the principles which, under Paganism, had produced the most noble fruits; introducing instead an enthusiasm which, on the one hand, led directly to a pitiful system of painful abstinence and degrading humility, and on the other, to the most outrageous arrogance, and most artful hypocrisy?

These are fruits which Christianity has produced under every variety of circumstances. It is true that it has encouraged benevolence; but it is also fearfully true that it has sanctified the most barbarous cruelty. The intolerance of Church Christianity has inflicted more pain, more bitter anguish, than the fiercest civil-wars. Christianity, from its earliest days, has indeed been a civil war, of the most inveterate kind—that kind of civil war which, pervading the whole frame of society, carries its flames into the

recesses of domestic life. Whoever it was that attributed to Jesus the declaration that he was not come to send peace on earth but a sword, and represented him dwelling, without pain or dissatisfaction,* on that horrible picture of the state to which his disciples would reduce domestic life, must have lived at a period when the spirit of intolerance had already begun to work.† To make such a prediction the effect of a divine spirit dwelling in the prophet, is a sad perversion of the reasoning powers.‡ No supernatural knowledge was required to perceive that the dreadful effects of the controversial spirit which Rabbinism had already displayed, even when kept under the severe yoke of the Romans, would be produced among the earliest professors of a modification of Judaism, which by the addition of the doctrines of a resurrection of the body and the reign of Christ during one thousand years with the elect upon earth, was apt to fire up enthusiasm into madness. Such fanaticism would at first lead to the sacrifice of the enthusiast's own life; but the time would soon

* If the passage, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke xii. 49,) be a parallel to that in Matthew, (x. 34,) Jesus is made to appear as enthusiastically anxious for the state of discord he predicts. But the metaphor of *Fire* may express merely an *active principle*.

† Matt. x. 34—"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes *shall be they* of his own household."

[‡ The prediction, it would seem, expressed not the *object* of his coming, but a partial *result* of it.]

arrive when the class which afforded the early victims would cover the earth with tyrants, the cruel oppressors of all who would not join with them in the pursuit and maintenance of power. No: I have too much respect for the *historical* character of Jesus of Nazareth, to recognize that frantic feeling of joy at the contemplation of the dreadfullest evils, because they coincided with his proselyting views. Such a declaration would have neutralized upon my mind, such as Thou, my God, hast given it to me, the effect of the most striking miracle. If I had seen Lazarus come out of the grave, having previously seen his body under the power of corruption, the recollection of such a desire as that of beholding the tenderest ties of nature converted into sources of the bitterest hatred, would have shown me that there must be some delusion in the miracle, because I am most certain that there is no possibility of such delusion in the moral principle which that enthusiastic desire opposes.*

What wonder, then, if a religion which sacrifices the holiest feelings and moral principles to dogmatic

* That passage in the Mosaic books where the Israelites are commanded to put to death any prophet who, on the ground of having *truly* predicted an event, should desire them to change their worship, (if we put aside the question as to the propriety of punishment, which, on the peculiar ground of the Jewish Constitution, is not without defence,) is profoundly philosophical, and proceeds exactly on the principles of Hume's well known argument. In what I have just stated I proceed upon similar grounds. The *Unity* of God should not be considered as shaken by any of the ten thousand wonders which have so frequently deceived mankind.

notions, reduce its professors to the state described in the passage which has suggested these reflections! A wonder indeed, and a miracle, it would have been, to see it produce what churchmen pretend to be its natural result—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

Oh my God! why Thou hast permitted such power for evil to what is called Christianity, I have not sufficient knowledge to explain; but *this* I firmly believe, that without the regular interposition of Thy Providence, working chiefly through men's experience, desires, and faculties, the horrible state to which Europe was reduced by the Papal power, as it exhibited itself under the most ambitious of those pretended Vicars of Christ, would have maintained itself triumphant to this very day. I am fully persuaded the prevalent Christianity is so far from helping our civilization, that it is civilization which has purified it, checked the ambition of the Church ministers, and is daily opening the eyes of thousands to the superstition which still deprives thy true Gospel of its beneficial influence. Oh! that I had a giant's strength to carry on that work! But Thou, my God, hast better instruments in reserve. I thank Thee, nevertheless, for having enabled me to oppose superstition front to front, and to die under the conviction that I have not spared myself!

## XIII.

### *Fear.*

Fear is, of all human infirmities, the most degrading: in the same degree as it takes possession of the human soul, it deprives it of rationality. But no fear has this fatal power in an equal extent with that which arises from the vague terrors of the imagination. *Doloris modus est, timoris non item,** is a profound observation quoted by Bacon as from St. Augustin. Hence the immensurable power of religious fears: they extend as far as imagination has power to fly. Such being their nature, could they have been neglected by the designing and ambitious? Since mankind has ever been divided into two parties—those who by force and deceit are made to obey, and the authors and managers of that oppression—it is impossible but that imaginary fears should have been used, at all times, for the purpose of keeping the inferior classes of society in subjection. This explains why no society has hitherto existed without a religion, and its inseparable concomitant—a priesthood, whose art and employment are to subdue the human mind by mental, or, as they are more properly called, spiritual fears.†

It is a remarkable property of religious Fear that it

* There is a limit to pain, but none to fear.

† Is there no exception made for the one true religion?—No. The true religion does not employ the subduing *Fear* I speak of: *Awe* and *Reverence* it fully acknowledges; but Fear is no source of Virtue.

may be made to rise from the conduct and opinions of others. It is not difficult to persuade the multitude, that the fierce anger of a Deity, who is represented as jealous and irritable, is excited against them, not only for their own misconduct, but for allowing others to act according to their will and judgment. The result of this persuasion must be a fierce hatred and indignation against those who expose the majority of a people to calamities, for which the sufferers would not have the gratification of sin. That a plague, a destruction by war or conflagration, should be occasioned (as people believe) for their own sins, is certainly much to be regretted; but that such evils fall indiscriminately upon a whole nation for the stubbornness of only a portion of the people, who will not conform with the majority in the established manner of worship or belief, requires more than human patience to endure. All the angry passions which dwell in the human breast arm themselves against the supposed offenders, and even the *love of God* knows no better method to exhibit itself than by the persecution of his enemies.

The history of the Jews presents many instances of this ardent zeal; but the same violence of religious feeling is found in all countries where the priesthood urge their followers to defend the honour of God from profanation. As the priesthood is the source of all information concerning God and his dealings with men, the effect of their exhortations must be the same as if God had exactly the character

and passions of the Priests. The interests and passions of their followers, unchecked by remorse, nay, raised by the certain hope of reward, and even by the generous feelings of loyalty, must possess the souls of all who wish to escape the fury of Divine anger, or wish to secure to themselves the blessings of Divine favour.

When the Priest calls out: "Those that are for God, let them follow me," who but dastardly cowards or impious men will not draw the sword for the Lord? How will the public indignation be kindled when every man and woman is reminded that the offence to be avenged is the cause of a plague which is rapidly devouring the people, and may soon carry off those who are dearer than life?—The Jews, followers of Moses and Aaron, saw the victims of national disobedience fall by the hand of the avenging angel: such visible demonstration was necessary to the grossness of their hearts: the disciples of an infallible Church, or a self-interpreting inspired Bible, do not require this sensuous demonstration: they see by the eyes of Faith that the opponents of Divine truth insult the Deity, and endanger the congregation of the Saints: they know those impious men by the declaration of the Church, or the demonstration of the Spirit,—why, then, should they spare these monsters till the spiritual plague should have devoured their Israel?

## XIV.

### *Death.*

When every one expected my speedy dissolution, I could not believe that my end was so near: now that others seem not to think me on the brink of my grave, I have an intimate persuasion that I shall not see the renewal of the leaves which are fast dropping to the ground. I feel my strength quite gone: my life flickers like an exhausted candle: a breath, a mere sigh, can extinguish the feeble flame: and nothing can shelter it much longer. There is nothing terrible in this closing scene, my God! The only thing I shrink from is bodily pain attended with that anguish to which my peculiar nervous system disposes me; but when the struggle between life and disease shall be over, the approach of the last repose must be perceived with pleasure—it must be somewhat like that moment when acute pain gives way to sleep.

Among the injuries which the prevalent Christianity has done in the countries where it is professed, the fear of death is, in my view, one of the greatest. What can be more cruel than to have surrounded with terrors the inevitable end assigned to us all? But Priests are necessarily cruel: their whole power depends on the fears of mankind. Death, and the invisible regions to which Death is said to be the entrance, are the sources of all priestly influence. Paul taught his followers to boast of their exemption from the fear of death. "Oh! death, where is thy

sting?" resounds from every pulpit; but how few utter that exclamation with perfect truth! In many individuals those words express the delirium of fear, which puts on the appearance of extravagant joy. No, no: the soul on which dogmatic Christianity has done its work cannot meet death with the quiet dignity of a rational being. We must look for examples of dignified deaths among the ancients, both classical and biblical. Before the Jews had introduced their mythological Hades, their sacred books never connected death with terror. Their early Fathers composed themselves to die, as they prepared themselves to sleep. They knew little or nothing of a life after death; and as they had come into existence without preparation on their part, they did not conceive it necessary for their departure: they ended this life thanking Thee, oh Source of all Life, for the blessings they had received, perhaps breathing a sigh at the recollection of the evils they had endured, and expressing their gratitude to Thee for the repose which Thou wert about to grant them with their departed Fathers.* They enjoyed the prospect of future existence in the life and prosperity of their children's children, and they rejoiced, not in their own *eternal* life, but in the *eternal* stream of life

* "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people."—Gen. xxv. 8. It is not easy to conceive how either Abraham or his historian could believe in that future life which gives such anxiety to our contemporaries

which they knew would flow from Thee without end or interruption.

I have often confessed to Thee, my God, my own more than indifference to that supposed continuation of life in which people so loudly profess a belief. That Thou art able to maintain my individual consciousness for ever, I will not deny, though my imagination faints whenever I try to embody that conception. I feel oppressed by the notion of eternal existence, even when the absence of evil is made one of its conditions. Such an existence seems to belong only to thy Infinite nature. It is generally supposed that morality would be at an end were it not for the fear of a never-ending life to be passed in misery. I much doubt the truth of this assertion, especially when I observe the multitude of means of escaping the punishment of sin, which the various Priesthoods offer to men. I value, besides, very little a morality that has its root in such fear. Why do we not teach men to fear the immediate, the inevitable punishment of misconduct—namely, self-reproach and remorse, the consciousness of their own degradation, the fear of its increase by frequent relapse? We might indeed cultivate with great success this foundation of morality, if many of our best men were not wasting their zeal and benevolence in the employment of those priestly means which are totally unable to produce any effect, unless they succeed in creating a vivid enthusiasm. Children are made spiritual slaves as soon as they are born: some Priesthood claims

them: to a certain association of believers the poor infants must be committed before they can utter a word, that not a moment may be lost in making the sounds of a creed strike their ears. Their susceptible imaginations are then filled up with material images of a heaven and a hell: good children, they are told, go to the former to live with Thee, oh God, in eternal happiness; bad children are sent to the latter place with the Devil and his Angels, a set of horrid monsters who torment those who fall to their lot. Alas! is this the way to develop a rational soul, to train it to the love of virtue? To this they answer, that we must accommodate ourselves to the faculties of children: this is the same as to say that we must make Religion *childish,* in order to implant it in the human soul. How much better it would be to wait for the development of the human faculties; to watch the progress of the moral sentiments, and give instruction as the mind required it!—But this method would not suit the priestly spirit; it would not create slavish minds, full of those superstitious fears which lay people prostrate at the feet of the Priest. The Protestants, who at one time appeared to have entered the path of religious liberty, have made the evil more hopeless of remedy, by the appearance of freedom which they give to their peculiar superstition and mental slavery. From the indications of thy Providence I perceive more likelihood that the thorough reformation of this spurious, this priestly Christianity, will take place among the spiritual subjects of the Pope, than among

the proud and superstitious Protestants of England. I turn my contemplative powers away from the thoroughly-organized means used in this highly-favoured country for perpetuating what is called the Church of England. With the same resolute spirit which directs their politics, the concerns of the *national* Religion (so they openly call it) are treated and managed. Their Clergy is a well-disciplined army; their Bishops show all the arrogance of military commanders, at the head of a strong force. Whoever offends the Church—that is, the Clergy—is trampled down without mercy. Men who devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge must join, at least in appearance, the Church, if they are to rank in public estimation according to their merit. Those who govern the affairs of the nation must profess themselves conscientiously determined to support the interests of the Church, though they may publicly disapprove its doctrines and discipline. The *Sovereign* of the country holds the Crown on condition of belonging to the Church of England. Never, oh God, did the world behold a more insolent usurpation of power, wealth, and dignity, *in Thy name*, than that of the English Church. The monstrous usurpations of Rome had the tradition of former ages, and the ignorance of that in which they were in vigour, to extenuate if not to excuse their guilt. But the English Church preserves all the pride and boldness of the darkest period of Popery, in the midst of light and knowledge. She cannot venture to do the same

things; but what she does, and what she aims at, requires and shows a more arrogant spirit than that which actuated the boldest of the pretended vicars of Christ. Thou, oh God, alone knowest how this formidable opponent of light and freedom, this great obstacle to the diffusion of that mighty stream of knowledge which has been swelling for more than three centuries, is to be removed. Persuasion, conviction, are totally powerless in such a case, besides that the means of producing them are, to a fearful degree, in the hands of the Church. I cannot foresee any way of upsetting an Establishment supported by external power, but a greater power of the same kind acting against it. In Thy hands are all the powers of man; and I firmly believe that Thou wilt direct them to the ultimate good of our species. We have seen a political church produce a fierce revolution; may, if I am allowed to conceive a humble wish, may England be spared a similar means of improvement!

## CHAPTER XIII.

### EXTRACTS FROM JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

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1841.—Ætat 66.

Carlisle Cottage, Liverpool,
January 1st.

My God! thou knowest that I do not feel justified in directing particular petitions to Thee. My heart is open before Thee. Thou knowest the great affliction in which I am lingering. My only request is for strength, patience, and love to Thee. As an expression of my love, I also pray for my son, my relations, and all my good friends, especially the Whatelys, and my great benefactor, my cousin Mr. Beck. Increase, O God, my trust in Thee. I have no suspicion of holding opinions offensive to Thee: but if my mind has been misdirected, do Thou set it right! I make this prayer in perfect confidence of the truth of my opinion, that religion does not consist in Orthodoxy. I feel quite certain on that point, and long for the day when all creeds shall be rejected by mankind!

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2nd.

Very much worse: exceedingly irritable. Mr.

Richard Yates came to speak about a servant. Mr. Yates suggested a voyage to Jamaica, an idea which had occurred to me, and which I fondly encourage. Dr. Sutherland came in the evening, and expressed surprise at my distressed countenance. Mr. Studley Martin came afterwards. At that time I was quite overcome with pain and misery, so that I could not suppress my tears. Dr. Sutherland opposed the Jamaica dream by stating the expensiveness of that Island.

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3rd. Sunday.

Applied a blister to the swelling in the neck. It gave me great pain till about the middle of the night, when the inflammation began to abate. Saw nobody—what a holy town this is!

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4th.

The night not very bad, considering my state.

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5th.

Rather better upon the whole; but unable to do anything regularly.—Mitchell's Aristophanes,—a rather exaggerated work: the specimens printed for private distribution by Mr. Hookham Frere are far superior: the political prejudices which break out every where make the work unpleasant. Who would have mentioned Mr. Mitchell's scholarship, if he had taken the popular side? That he is a good *first class*

man, is true; but how many such men may be found at Oxford (much more at Cambridge), at any time. His admiration of Mitford is absurd. Is there any person of moderate taste who can read his Grecian History? I read it through in the blindness of Oxonian faith; but when I tried it a second time I could not get on.

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6th.

A tolerable night, and not much tormented in the morning. At seven in the evening I was seized with great pain in the back.

At no period of my life have I made greater efforts to be patient than at present. The ordinary absence of all but mercenary persons is the most bitter part of my life.

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8th.

Pains on the increase: the frost very violent. My mind is this morning full of the sufferings of the Poor: are they less the children of God than myself? No. I must not repine.

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Jan. 9th.

Sent my finally corrected Memoirs to Mr. Thom.

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Thursday. Jan. 14th.

In very low spirits. I am reading Abdy's Journal

on the United States, a work that convinces me of the existence of national moral diseases. The antipathy to the Negroes and their most distant descendants is a kind of madness. Much as I love liberty, I would not live within the Union, just because I love liberty. The United States are under the tyranny of ignorance and prejudice. I had sooner live under a Sultan. A Mob is the worst of Tyrants, because a Mob has no individuality. A Mob is a sort of Monster, a *tertium quid*, resulting from passion and freedom, or rather from unchecked passion mistaken for freedom.

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Jan. 19th.

Pretty well, but exceedingly low.—I feel very strongly that, in all circumstances of life, but especially in cases of distressing and hopeless illness, no evil is equal to that of losing self-command, and surrendering oneself to the power of the incumbent evil. The only check to the agony of despair which threatens me, is a deeply felt horror of such a state of mind.

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22nd.

I am falling asleep with the pen in my hand, which draws involuntary lines.

24th.

Better, but in constant suffering; struggling fearfully with bodily and mental misery.

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26th.

Great efforts to keep up my spirits.

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Jan. 28th.

I have frequently observed that active kindness—that attachment which sacrifices personal comfort to the relief of suffering persons, has long been on the decline in England. Refinement has destroyed it. People have, on the one hand, adopted the hospitality of dinner parties, and limited, on the other, that true hospitality which relieves the peculiar sufferings of the stranger. Few, in former times, were left to die in lodgings; and there are instances of persons who, though they had a wife, were allowed to go to die under the roof of a friend. See the death of Mr. Bewley, in Rutt's Life of Priestley, vol. i. p. 79. Finding himself dying, he made a journey from Norfolk to Birmingham, accompanied by Mrs. Bewley, in order to see Dr. Priestley, and after spending about a week with him, he went to his friend, Dr. Burney, and at his house he died. Were it not for Orthodoxy, I believe I might go to die at ——'s, who belongs to a former state of things; but the *Trinity* stands in my way.

*To Dr. Channing.*

Liverpool, January 28th, 1841.

My dear Sir,

The difficulty and pain with which I guide my pen have been so much upon the increase, that nothing but absolute necessity has forced me to undergo the fatigue of writing a letter. The last work of yours on Slavery, which I received from your kindness two or three days ago, has filled me with such spirits that I must write a few lines to congratulate you upon the great merit of that composition. It appears to me to rise above argument, and to derive its powers of conviction from an intuition of our own nature beheld in the intimate connection of God with our soul. I hope I am not employing vain words. I should think very lowly of any one who had never attached some deep sense to the notion of the Oracle within us—that ultimate ground and foundation of our moral being. No argument, indeed, can be sound which has not that internal perception for its basis. All the rest may be accommodated to circumstances and expediency.—Slavery has nothing to fear from mere logic; but it trembles at the plain voice of that moral indignation which makes mankind ashamed of weighing the value of some casks of sugar, against the pangs and the degradation of slavery. Be sure, my dear Sir, that "whereso-ever this Gospel" of human emancipation shall be preached, your works on slavery will be a most honourable memorial of you. I never read any moral production that so filled up my soul.

You gave me in your last letter some observations on Music, which I intended to have acknowledged; but the internal Lyre, to borrow the language of Socrates, has been unstrung within me. Large sums of money have been (in my opinion) wasted on the Bridgewater Treatises; yet no one has thought of Music as a proof of the intelligence and goodness of the Deity, though the relations of the musical ear with the vibrating bodies, are as fixed and as regular as

the motions of the planets. Add that the laws by which Music produces its wonders are superinduced above those of mere hearing—a system within a system, for the purpose of the purest pleasure.

You will observe, that the awkwardness of my hand has made me blot over this letter. You must therefore excuse its shortness, and receive it as a proof of my undying esteem and friendship.

Your ever sincere Friend,

J. Blanco White.

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29th.

Great pains in the night and morning. It seems as if I was dying.—The whole night in a state of sickness and fainting.

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30th.

Got up with difficulty.

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Feb. 1st.

So ill as to expect to die within four-and-twenty hours. Mr. Thom, the greatest part of the morning and evening with me.—

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4th.

Very ill: passed the day in bed: a restless night: —better in the morning of Friday the 5th.

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Sat. 6th.

Got up.——

[These words are the last entry in his Journal.—Increased rheumatism, producing severe stiffness in

the hands and neck, prevented him from ever using his pen again. On Wednesday, February 23rd, he was removed with much difficulty, in a sedan chair, to the house of Mr. Rathbone, Greenbank, near Liverpool. This change had frequently, before, been proposed, and indeed with earnestness and solicitation pressed upon him; but the pains of removal to a frame distressingly sensitive, and now incapable of doing anything for self-relief, with the supposed impossibility of carrying with him all that little apparatus of comfort or alleviation, which the long experience of a confirmed invalid enables him to collect about him, made him always shrink from strange places and circumstances, so long as nothing could be gained from the effort but a temporary benefit. When he felt his end approaching, this reluctance disappeared: he longed to die among friends.

For some short time his spirits seemed to revive at Greenbank. The daily sight of trees and fields, tender nursing, and the face of friends, with the absence of all distresses external to himself, hardly attainable by a helpless sufferer in lodgings, soothed and cheered him;—but soon, great prostration of strength appeared, and for nearly three months, to use his own words, "*he lingered in the face of Death.*"—

It is so much more easy to give vivid pictures of bodily suffering, than to convey any real image of the Mind which endured them, that perhaps eye-

witnesses alone can truly catch the spirit of such times of anguish and patience. Who can describe the torture of a frame with no unwounded part to support its own weight, and yet make the reader subordinate the physical impression, whilst he feels full upon him the large, patient eye, the only member that could be freely moved,—or sees it lifted in love, calmness, and supplication? For many weeks before his death, stiffness, with severe pain, in the neck, and total inability to move himself, kept him from the use of a bed, and both his days and his nights were passed in the chair in which he died. Long confinement in one position, and the gradual perishing of the powers of life, had produced mortification at the extremities,—and in these circumstances he continued, through sufferings which even witnesses could very faintly know, and with a self-control and patience which only God can compute. His friends did not make a habit of recording whatever of interest he uttered during this period; nor ever was the attempt purposely made to draw from him his final states of mind on the great questions which had been the studies of his life. But he was one who had his being in his highest thoughts, and could not but speak of them,—and occasionally, those who were watching by him were found to have written down some touching words:—these have been collected,—although too few and scanty to give any faithful delineation of the solemn grandeur of his last days. On one occasion, when his impression was that he

could not survive the day, as if giving the result of the solemn glance he had been taking at the past and future of his being, he spoke, at intervals, almost in these words, his view of himself:

"In the midst of my sufferings, all the leading thoughts are present with me. I am weak, and therefore my feelings overpower me.—I have contributed my mite to the Liberty of mankind. It is cast into God's treasury.—I stand upon a rock. God's Providence is carried on by the struggles of Reason against the passions.—I have no doubts. I came from God, and I go to Him. The Guide, the Light within us, is not ourselves, nor dependent on our volitions. There is, then, an infinite Source of the rationality we know to be in us, who will receive us to Himself."

On another occasion, believing himself to be dying, he said:—

"I am going, my dear friend,—I am leaving you very fast.—I have not formed such definite views of the nature of a future life as many have—but I trust Him who has taken care of me thus far. I should trust a friend, and can I not trust *Him*!—There is not in my mind the possibility of a doubt."

In one of those moments of intense pain, when some expression of anguish is irrepressible, he was overheard in prayer:—

"Oh my God! oh my God!—But I know Thou dost not overlook any of Thy creatures. Thou dost not overlook me.—So much torture—to kill a worm!

Have mercy upon me, oh God! Have mercy upon me! I cry to Thee, knowing I cannot alter Thy ways.—I cannot if I would——and I *would not* if I could. If a word could remove these sufferings, I would not utter it!"

To Mrs. R——, on first going one morning to ask how he was, he replied:—

"Just life enough to suffer. But I submit,—and not only submit, but rejoice."

Once in great weakness and pain, on opening his eyes and seeing the same friend sitting by him, he said:

"Still here:—You all are to me the representatives of the merciful compassions of the Almighty."—

He was not freed, even to the last, from that benign persecution which a dogmatic religion moves even tender hearts to inflict. To an excellent lady, who was impelled to urge the dangers of his Faith upon the dying *Confessor*, upon the man whose life had been a search for truth, and a martyrdom to what he had found, he dictated the following reply:—

Greenbank, March 14, 1841.

My ever kind Friend,

I am so fully aware of the devoted friendship which dictated your last note, that I require no explanation in regard to the tone of certainty, as to my being in the wrong, which is perceptible throughout the whole of it. But I am so near my end, that I must enter a protest against the supposition which makes me appear like a self-convicted criminal.

You have examined in religion, and the examination has

ended in the perfect conviction you express in regard to certain doctrines. What other ground can you have? I have examined the same points most conscientiously, during the best part of my life, and I am compelled by the clearest conviction to declare your conclusions wrong. What other ground can *I* have? God alone knows who is in the right. But although this expression sounds like doubt, it does not mean it. As far as it is given me to see into these subjects, I am fully convinced that God is my Saviour, that through his goodness alone I shall be saved, that the whole system of the atonement is a mistake.

I assert this just in the same spirit as that in which you charge me with error. In spite of my views I love and respect you, considering the happiness which has arisen to me from your friendship as one of the best gifts of God.

The difference of our creeds consists in this; that whilst I cannot conceive that any abstract error of yours can interfere with your eternal happiness, yours forces you to consider me as a condemned criminal, between whom and eternity there stands nothing but a thread of life.—Whatever you may say, I cannot believe that you entertain this persuasion in regard to me.

May the God of peace and love bless you.

Your friend,

J. B. W.

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About this time he received the following Letter from Dr. Channing:—

Boston, Feb. 27, 1841.

My dear Sir,

Many thanks to you for your last letter. I see that you made an effort in writing, but I hope you were not harmed by it. Your approbation of my writings is encouraging to me; and I need the more some cheering words from abroad,

because I hear not many at home. I began to write on Slavery, in consequence of the almost universal insensibility on the subject around me. There are more signs of life now, but a cause which has to make its way against avarice, commercial interests, conservative fears, and the selfish views of politicians, cannot triumph in a day. I have reason to think that I have done some good,—at any rate, I have written under that feeling of necessity which Paul felt when he said, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." I have obeyed a divine monition, and cannot have laboured in vain.

Do not think, from these remarks, that I attach much importance to these labours. I should not have spoken of them, had you not expressed so kindly an interest in them.

I have been reading, or rather am just finishing, a book which I doubt not you have read with great interest—Ranke's History of the Popes. I confess I was not before fully aware of the powerful reaction of Catholicism against Protestantism at the close of the sixteenth century. It is plain that the civil power was the right arm of the Church, and that she reconquered her lost possessions chiefly by force. But the civil power did not act wholly, or perhaps mainly, from policy, but very much from religious impulses, so that the religious principle lay at the foundation of the mighty movement which rocked all Europe. What so formidable as this principle in its perversions! Men really believed, from the throne to the cottage, that a fellow-creature, holding what was called a heresy, was God's *personal foe*, that their hatred of him was shared by the Creator, and that to drive him into the Church, or to drive him out of the world into hell, was the most acceptable service they could render to Heaven. It is comforting to think that this horrible doctrine was really held, that it was not a mere *pretext* of tyranny, that the Pope and Emperor yielded as hearty assent to it as the common man. But, on the other hand, it is a fearful thought that men are liable to

such delusions, that God's name may be enlisted conscientiously on the side of the fiercest passions; that tyranny, in its most terrible forms, may be grounded on ideas of Duty and Religion. Are we sure that we are safe now against illusions equally pernicious, though of a different character? We have certainly gained something. The fundamental error of Catholicism was an utter distrust of human nature on the subject of religion. It was universally believed that religion was to be imposed on man from abroad; that there was nothing in his intellect or affections to carry him to God; an opinion not very strange in an age of darkness—and nothing more was needed for the superstructure which was reared on it. This we have outgrown in a measure, and I have no fear of the revival of the notion; and still more, I have great hopes from the partial recognition of men's capacities and rights. But the great fact of history, that the development of our mysterious nature has been made through so much error, suffering, conflict, must always chastise our hopes.—What a spell seems to bind the nations at this moment! What has France learned from the past?—But I have no thought of inflicting on you gloomy forebodings. Such are some of the ideas which Ranke's book suggests, but on the whole it is very encouraging. He teaches that a dangerous principle or force, by its very prevalence, awakens counteracting forces, and that the springs which are at work in human affairs are too complicated and vast to be comprehended or managed by civil or religious despots. Catholicism met resistance to its project of universal empire from the jealousies of the very States on which it leaned. May it not be added that the Jesuits, by their very intelligence and subtleties, at first so successful, awakened an intellectual force fatal to their cause? They undertook to *reason* men out of their *Reason*; an enterprize which could not but fail in the long run.—All this is an old story to you, but Ranke is on my table, and I am fresh from his pages; and I fell naturally into this train of

thoughts.—I shall rejoice to hear of an alleviation of your sufferings. God grant you his supports and consolations!

Very truly and respectfully your friend,

W. E. CHANNING.

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He dictated an answer, of which only these notes have been preserved:—

"March 21st, 1841.

"In my opinion, the desire for religious Reformation had not a very deep root in society. The gross abuses of the Church of Rome had disgusted a part of the people. Its wealth had excited the avarice of the great; and as many of the Potentates of Europe were interested in checking the political power of Rome, controversy was made the foundation of their attacks upon that formidable force. As dry Controversy has no tendency to Enthusiasm, the necessity of giving some spirit to the work of the Reformation promoted the always existing tendency to enthusiastic views, in the mass of the people.

"Hence the absurd variety of Sects among Protestants, which is, and must always be, the stumbling-block of every person who has false notions of the Unity of the Church. To recover this Unity was the end of every honest man among the Catholics, especially if not possessed of philosophical views on the character of a leading body of the faithful. Thus when Bossuet condensed the powers of his mind to give a mortal blow to Protestantism, he exclusively insisted on its want of Unity.—From these views some facts among those mentioned by Ranke may be explained.

"That in the present state of popular knowledge we have no security against the Church of Rome, I conceive to be true. The Protestants themselves are the main cause of this. Yet there is a light spread abroad, which is a kind of security against any universal defection from the progressing path of truth. And in regard to mankind, or

rather in regard to the civilized part of it, we must repose our trust on that general character of Providence which, in spite of difficulties and dangers, has led us out of the darkness of former ages into this feeble but pure glimmering of truth, which seems to lead all the thinking portion of mankind at present."

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He had, at all times, the strongest sense of the value of social worship; and when his bodily sufferings permitted, he never omitted an opportunity of seeking these connections with his fellow men. A few weeks before his death, he sent for the writer of these notices, who was in the same house with him, early on Sunday morning,—and having for days together suffered anguish which cannot be described, he said with tears, which he was too feeble to restrain :—

" I wish you to ask for me the prayers of your congregation. I do not doubt the goodness of my God: nor do I believe that He overlooks me, or requires intercession,—but my soul longs for religious sympathy, and I wish to have the feeling that I am not separated from my fellow Christians, nor deprived of the consolations I have always found from social prayer."

An idea of the weakness, of the utter dependance on the services of others, to which he was reduced, was faithfully conveyed in the words of one of his friends, " that even the tear which any expression of affectionate sympathy, or his own silent heart-prayer,

drew from him, had to be wiped away by the hand of another." Nothing, at this time, more forcibly impressed those who saw much of him than the simplicity, the directness with which he submitted himself to the necessities of such a condition. It was the unreserved readiness of a child,—but it was also the dignity of a child of God, who can receive no degradation from his Father's hands. He endured, as coming from God, with a perfect simplicity, what without that feeling would have been humiliation worse than death.

It had been usual to lift him from one large chair to another, and wheeling it from room to room, to give as much variety and freshness to his life as his condition permitted; but at last all such change became impossible. For several days before he expired, the sense of suffering was growing dead, and he wished for no alteration of position. He was gradually perishing away. On the fourteenth of May, about two o'clock in the morning, awakening from a short sleep, he said to the friend who was watching by him at the time:—

"I shall drive every one away from me: you will not give me up. I see the links in the chain of Providence that has brought me to where I am. Though there are difficulties in the course of this our life, yet in the direction of those difficulties there are circumstances that are more than compensations. I never doubted of Providence:—but I see it in my own case, more clearly than in any Treatise.—These

people are to me the representatives of a merciful God; but if for the purity of the house, or the health of any one, a change is necessary, let me not be considered."

The night after, to several members of the family collected around him, he spoke of the state of his mind in what he knew to be the presence of Death, and, aware that the power of distinct utterance was failing, added:—"When the hour shall come, let it be said once for all, my soul will be concentrated in the feeling, 'My God, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'—God to me is Jesus; and Jesus is God—of course not in the sense of Divines."

He remained some days longer, chiefly in the state of one falling asleep, until the morning of the 20th, when he awoke up, and with a firm voice and great solemnity of manner, spoke only these words:—"Now I die." He sat as one in the attitude of expectation, and about two hours afterwards—it was as he had said.*

On Monday the twenty-fourth of May he was interred, according to the instructions of his Will, in the burial-ground attached to Renshaw-street Chapel, Liverpool, in the 66th year of his age.

* There was no apparent pain or struggle, and it was an inexpressible relief to behold, shortly after, the singular beauty and repose of features lately so worn and suffering; but there took place in the act of expiring, what we had observed in other cases after long exhaustion, but have never seen described. A sudden darkness beneath the surface, like the clouding of a pure liquid from within, the immediate shadow of Death, was seen passing from the forehead downwards, and leaving all clear again behind it as it moved along.

A Letter written by Dr. Channing on hearing of the death of his friend, whom he was so soon to follow, is a fitting close to these Memoirs.

*To the Rev. J. H. Thom.*

Boston, June 20th, 1841.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of May 24, just received, has given me pain, though it was expected. Your previous letter had prepared me to hear of Mr. White's departure. I ought not to feel pain at an event which has terminated such severe sufferings, and converted his faith into fruition. But we cannot dismiss a friend from our home, much more from the world, without some sadness. I confess I have a feeling of disappointment at this event. I have for years cherished the hope of seeing Mr. White. When I have thought of crossing the ocean, the pleasure of intercourse with him has risen to my mind, among the chief I should find in England. Perhaps there was not a man in your country whom I wanted so much to see. I felt that no mind could open to me so interesting and instructive a history. I know by experience some of the conflicts of spirit through which he passed, and I longed to put a thousand questions to him, about the processes through which he arrived at this and another conviction. I venerated the rare heroism with which he sought truth.—But he is gone, and I am to know him only in another world. The account you give me of his trust and patience has done me good. I am little moved by passionate piety in death; but how grand is the entire submission of so calm, reflecting a man, in such deep suffering. My own trust seems to have gained strength. I rejoice that he has committed his manuscripts to *you*, for you understand him better than any body. I shall wait impatiently for his autobiography. I besought him again and again to leave some record of his inward history—

and I expect from it singular benefits. Not that I shall agree with him in all his speculations: I differed from him a good deal; but I do not know that I ever read anything from his pen which I did not find instructive. He understood the controversy between Romanism and Protestantism as few do. Very few of us get to the heart of this quarrel. Most Protestants fight Romanism under its own standard.—I have sometimes observed on the beach, which I am in the habit of visiting, a solemn unceasing undertone, quite distinct from the dashings of the separate successive waves—and so in certain minds, I observe a deep undertone of truth, even when they express particular views which seem to me discordant or false. I had always this feeling about Mr. White. I could not always agree with him, but I felt that he never lost his grasp of the greatest truths. I sympathize sincerely with you in your loss. How much have you lost! The daily privilege of communion with a great and good mind is a daily light shed over our path. I know something of your affliction, for in the short space of two years, God has taken from me two friends, Dr. Follen, and Dr. Tuckerman, who were knit to me in true Christian brotherhood. But we will not say we have lost such friends. They live within us in sweet and tender remembrances. They live around us in the fruits of their holy labours. They live above us, and call us in the tones of a friendship which Heaven has refined, to strengthen our union with them by sharing their progress in truth and virtue.—I shall write a line to Mrs. Rathbone, to whom I feel myself a debtor, for her kindness to our common friend. When you have leisure, I shall be glad to know more particularly what writings Mr. White left?

Very sincerely your friend,

W. E. CHANNING.]

# APPENDIX.

# APPENDIX I.

(Vol. I. p. 3.)

## COPY OF A GENEALOGY OF THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE,

Commonly known in Spain by the name Don JOSE MARIA BLANCO Y CRESPO;* the original of which, with the respective Coats of Arms, signed by William Hawkins, Ulster King at Arms, on the 24th July 1720, is in the possession of my Brother FERDINAND WHITE (or BLANCO) at Seville.

### *LINEA PATERNA.*

(1) Richardus White, de Richardstown, in Comitatu Lugensi, Armiger. — Maria Fitz-Gerald, Filia Comitis Kildariæ.

Thomas White, de Richardstown, Armiger. — Maria, Filia Mauritii Eustace de Calverstown, Equitis Aurati.

(2) Edwardus White, de Civitate Dublini, Armiger. — Maria Drumgold.

Patricius White, de Civitate Dublinii, Armiger. — Cæcilia Browne.

(3) Thomas White, de Civitate Waterford, Generosus. — Maria Nangle.

Carolus White, ad avunculum Patricium Nangle iturus, in expeditione obiit.

Thomas White, in Gadibus cum Paulo fratre commorans.

Paulus White, in Gadibus, nunc degens, suburbanum habet in Villa Huelva.

‡ Guillelmus White, in Sevilla, Urbe Hispaniæ, Mercator.

§ Alsoon White, nupta Jacobo Archdekin.

### *LINEA MATERNA.*

Johannes Nangle, Baro de Navan.† — Christiana Cusiack.

Johannes Nangle. — Dorothea, Filia Richardi Mansfield, Equitis Aurati.

Robertus Nangle — Eleonara Hore.

Philipus Nangle — Margareta Stevenson.

Patricius Nangle — Anna Devenish.

Johannes Nangle — Alsoon Gough.

Patricius Nangle, in Manila, in India Orientali obiit.

Philipus Nangle, Mercator, Hispaniæ nunc in Sevilla commorans anno 1720.

## ORIGINAL NOTES IN THE PEDIGREE'S BAD LATIN.

(1) Stirps qua hic Richardus White descenditur, a Lotharingia in Angliam appulit una cum Gulielmo Conquestore, et postea in Hiberniam migravit cum Richardo, Comite Strigul (vulgo vocato Strongbow) Anno Dom. 1170, annoque Regni Hen. II. 15°. Ab illo tempore ibi mansit, et inde diversæ inclytæ familiæ ejusdem nominis oriuntur.

(2) Hic Edwardus transmigravit a Richardstown ad Dublinum ubi necnon (non tantum?) habitavit sed plurimas domus ædificavit et magnas opes et honores in illa civitate sibi comparavit.

(3) Hic Thomas jam juvenis (adhuc juvenis?) a civitate Dublini ad Civitatem Manapiæ vel Waterfordiæ transmigravit tempore Oliveri Cromwell.

(Signed) GULIELMUS HAWKINS,
Ulster Rex Armorum totius Hiberniæ.

## MY OWN NOTES.

† Concerning the Barons of Navan, I have found this Note, page 29, Vol. I. of Lady Morgan's "The O'Briens and O'Flahertys":—"Of the title of barons (not lords) there are several families that yet remain in this kingdom. Many are extinct, and some are advanced to higher degrees of honour. Of old, we had in this country (Westmeath), the Baron of Moynshell (Tuitt). The family remains in good reputation and port, although the title be almost obsolete. The Baron of Ratheonrah (Owen)—the family now reduced to one poor brogue-maker, the chief of a few mean cottiers. In the county of Meath, the Baron of *Navan* (Nangle,) the Baron of Galtrim, (Hussey); in the county of Kilkenny, the Baron of Burnchurch (Fitzgerald); in Munster, the Baron of Loughmoe (Purcell), and several other families in this kingdom. This honour is hereditary in the several families, though the style (I know not by what neglect) be almost worn out everywhere."—*Survey.*

‡ This William White, my grandfather, inherited the fortune of his uncle, Philip Nangle, who had established a mercantile house at Seville; an establishment carried on ever since by my grandfather, the said W. White, my father, William White, H. B. Majesty's Vice-Consul at Seville, and my brother, Ferdinand White, under the firms White and Plunket, Cahill and White, Cahill, White and Beek. My grandfather married *Anne Morrough.*

§ This Mrs. Archdekin was living not many years ago. I believe she had become a Protestant at the time of her marriage.

J. B. W.

* Crespo y Neve was my mother's name; according to Spanish custom it was sometimes added to my name, sometimes omitted.

*Copy of an Original Document now in my Brother's possession.*

Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos præsentes literæ pervenerint, nos infrascripti de Clero Catholico Rom. Civitatis Waterfordiæ in regno Hiberniæ, salutem in Domino.—Cum pium sit ac honestum veritati testimonium perhibere, ne error aut deceptio præjudicii ipsam opprimat; cumque Dominus Gullielmus White, Hispali in Hispania degens, testimonium a nobis de fide et genere authenticum, postulasset, Nos igitur postulato tam justo libenter annuendo, tenore præsentium, fidem facimus ac testamur prædictum D. Guillielmum White, ex legitimo matrimonio natum, filium esse D. Thomæ White, ex antiquissima domo Whitorum de Leixlip et D^nc. Mariæ Nangle, necnon baptizatum juxta ritum S. R. Ecclesiæ per Rev^m. D^m. Joannem Fobyn, pastorem Ecclesiæ parochialis SS^mæ. Trinitatis, 22° Augusti A.D. 1689, adstante patrino D. Martino Walsh, de hac civitate, et matrinâ D^a. Anna Nangle, de eâdem civitate. Insuper testamur prædictum D. Guillielmum White, necnon parentes ejus ac majores, tam ex parte paterna quam materna (quoad scire unquam potuimus) ab omni hæresis, infidelitatis, infamiæ aut impuri sanguinis notâ semper immunes, tenaces orthodoxæ fidei alumnos extitisse; quinimmo propter constantem fidei Catholicæ Romanæ professionem bonorum jacturam, ærumnasque plurimas fuisse perpessos. In quorum fidem manu nostrâ subscripsimus Waterfordiæ die duodecima mensis Octobris millesimo septingentesimo decimo tertio. 1713 stylo veteri = Joannes Higgins, Rector Eccl. S^ti. Olai, Waterfordiensis = Paulus Bellew, Rector Eccl. SS^mæ. Trinitatis, Waterfordiensis = Joannes Kenedy, Pastor Ecclæ. Kilbarriensis = Edmundus Everard, Rector Eccl. S^ti. Patritii, Waterfordiensis.

# APPENDIX II.

## LETTERS TO LORD HOLLAND, RELATING TO THE SEMANARIO PATRIOTICO AND THE ESPAÑOL.*

*The Semanario Patriotico.*

(Vol. I. p. 145—51.)

Seville, 30th of May, 1809.

My Lord,

A light indisposition which I have suffered these past days, and of which I am not entirely recover'd, has prevented me from the pleasure of writing to you, and giving you my gratefull thanks for the observations upon the method of joining the cause of Ferdinand to that of Liberty. Would to God that such a party should exist in favour of that unhappy monarch, which could be gained for the benefit of their object, and for the good of our country: That I easily conceive could be done. But let me observe, my Lord, that the part of the Spanish people which has cordially espoused the cause of Ferdinand are no ennemys to the reformation of our constitution; the lovers of Liberty are engaged with such adversarys as will never be gained by this kind of stratagem, and can be only conquered by force.

The kind reception that the generallity of our people has given to our Semanario, the joy with which they listen to

[* In order not to destroy the signs of a gradual acquisition of his masterly knowledge and use of our language, the most perfect perhaps ever attained by a foreigner, these Letters, the earliest of his English MSS., are printed without even an orthographical correction.]

the claims for a reformation, and the eagerness with which they read the impugnations of a certain kind of prejudices, are more than sufficient proof of the happy dispositions they entertain in favour of the real improvements of our nation. But we will never give the change to that party which, under the name of Ferdinand's rights, direct their exertions to the only point of perpetuating their power and all our evils. You know well how the general expectation was turned to the promise of a constitution: you now see how cruelly we have been deceived; for so must be say'd after the ambiguous decree of our Junta. What can we expect from the deputees of the Cortes that by no means will be the true representatives of the nation, and according to the old corrupted style, will be taken amongst our Grandees, our Marquises, our Bishops, and our Regidores, without the lest knowledge of the people? And how do you think the Cortes will be prepared by a Commitee, where none but the greatest enemys of our rights will sit, Mr. Jovellanos excepted? What a feeble barrier to the attempts of such a party! The man who prevented the publication of our friend's manifesto, the man who can never agree in the opinion of the original sovereignty of the People! Excuse, my Lord, the strong feelings of my heart. I pay the greatest respect to the knowledge and virtues of this honourable man, but I cannot trust to him alone the defence of our Liberty.

Such is, to my sight, the disagreable situation of business, that all my hopes are turning into despondency. Perhaps, not been accustomed to deal in public affairs, I am too sensible both to wishes and fears. But may not an unhappy end confirm my suspicions!

I have not yet written to Mr. Cobbet: I have the letter

almost done, but as I am very little confident of my English, I require a great leisure to write to a man whose goodness is not well known to me as yours is.

You may be sure, my Lord, that your observations will be always agreable and instructive to me, and that I will make use of them in the first opportunity.

Be so kind as to present my humble respects to Lady Holland.

I am, my Lord, yours faithfully,

J. M. Blanco.

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Seville, 10th of June, 1809.

My Lord,

I have seen with the greatest pleasure the approbation you are so kind as to give to my little Discourse on the accord of Monarchy and Liberty; and you may be sure that your friendly advices will be allways beneficial both to my publication and to the cause of our country. I therefore adopt the idea of writing another Discourse upon the plan you propose to me about nobility, which will be an appendix to a few lines on Equality that are already prepared for publishing. The hurry in which I am obliged to write keeps me always short from the perfection to which, according to my feeble talents, I would endeavour to reach; but I will be very happy if I can by these means excite the curiosity and interest of my countrymen for public bussnes.

I am, my Lord, yours,

J. M. Blanco.

Seville, the 20th of Juin, 1809.

My Lord,

I am very sorry to tell you that I have been stopped in my scheme of writing the Discourse upon Nobility, by our friend Quintana's advice. As we cannot write upon this subject without pursuing the many abuses which are the beloved objects of our Gentry, he thinks not proper to awake their pride, neither to give them the alarm against the general reformation. It is true that I cannot prevail upon myself not to give some strong hints against those prejudices, whenever I find an occassion. Though I acknowledge the advantages of that conciliating manner of writing which you recommend to me, I must own that I cannot temperate my indignation, when I consider this hideous crowd of Grandees, Hidalgos, and Churchmen, who will never be gained to any thing favourable to the good principles. Our friend, who is pretty inclined to this disposition of mind, prefers the adjournment of the struggle against the usurpations of our Nobility, to the necessity of yielding in the least to their extravagant pride. I assure you it must be a struggle, and no kind of transaction is a sufficient remedy. There is hardly a man in Spain who is not a nobleman: you will find, even amongst the beggars, who will boast of his ancestors. The generallity of this prejudice making it ridiculous, renders it in a great manner harmless in the populous towns; but it is not so in the villages, where two or three familys of hidalgos are sufficient to ruin all their neighbours, and to keep the poor in the most intolerable state of abjection. Nobility in our large towns is a sort of foolishness; in the country, a right to tyranny. We must leave Nobility stand as an unavoidable evil; but how shall we contrive to put all our *hidalgos* to

one level, which is absolutely necessary? How can they be reduced to believe that a man who is newly incorporated in the Gentry must be entitled to equall rights with those who can show their genealogy to the age of the Deluge? Every family has a measure of their own to calculate the degrees of nobility, and every town is subdivided in many classes of *hidalguia*, whose members have no intercourse, no civil commerce one with the others. I cannot pass over these considerations, and will rather be silent for some time upon this point, than to be indulgent to this kind of people.

This is also the origin of our silence upon the Decree of Convocation. Every day I am more and more persuaded of the unlawfull intentions which are there concealed. The generality of our rulers are displaying in an unveiled manner the true caracter of the Roman decemvirs; and we shall not be their support by praising, directly or indirectly, a Decree which they forward on purpose to appear as lovers of our rights, while they only aspire to perpetuate their power.

I suppose that the introduction of our public paper in Germany ought to be the business of the Government: but they look more for an opportunity of forbidding the publication, than to the means of giving it any degree of importance. At the publication of every numero we are sure of a motion against it.

I have been delighted with Cowper's verses, and I would endeavour to translate them into Spanish, if the genius of our Poetry could admit so much of a didactical character as the English and French.

Yours affectionately,

J. M. Blanco.

*The Espanol.*

(Vol. I. p. 180—208.)

[No date.]

My Lord,

I give you my warm thanks for the subscriptions to the Espanol, with which I have been favoured from your house, and most sincerely wish that it might by worthy of your approbation when published. I am not able to express the fatigue and trouble I have undergone in this first publication. I thought I would have a coadjutor in Mr. Abella, but we could not agree in Principles, and I was left to my own exertions when the time was very much advanced. You may conceive what is correcting a Spanish book printed in England: this and every other mechanical part of the work, together with the rest of troublesome arrangements, have fallen upon me, and I very probably see that I can entertain no hopes of being relieved for the future. The Government appears not inclined to support the Espanol. All Mr. Wellesley's solicitations to his father in my favour, have proved hitherto inefficacious, and I do not expect that the appearance of the first number might change the Marquis's mind, as he very likely will never read it.

Things being in this situation, I must augment my exertions as far as it is my power, and endeavour to compensate the loss of a litterary speculation with the probable success of another, about which I take the liberty to request your advice.

A selection of Spanish Old Comedies is a work which never has been performed. Huerta began his *Teatro Espanol*, but you know very well his corrupted taste and litterary extravagance. The work remained incomplete, and is by no

means fit to give an idea of our stage. I think I would do a real service to the *Amateurs* of the Spanish language in England, by publishing a pretty edition which should contain the best plays of Lope de Vega, Moreto, and Calderon. A Preface, or introductory chapter, presenting a general view of the Spanish Comedy, and some critical remarks upon every play contained in the volume, would, I fancy, embellish the work and make it more interesting. In case you should think favourably of my plan, I am determined to steal some moments from the tedious Periodical Pamphlet, and to pursue constantly, though slowly, this more flattering scheme.

I am so confident of your goodness towards me, that I owe the first idea of this work to the recollection of your Spanish books. I therefore expect that you will have the kindness to let me know whether I might peruse those which I may want for my purpose.

I am, my Lord,
Most faithfully yours,
BLANCO WHITE.

P.S. I was just finishing this letter when I received your kind invitation, by the medium of Mr. Allen. I am very happy in admitting it, and shall have the pleasure to dine with you on Tuesday.

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32, Upper Marylebone Street,
July 10, 1810.

My Lord,

I am not surprised to hear Quintana's opinion about the first number of the Espanol, for though I honour myself

with the profession of his same political principles, we have never agreed in the consequences, especially when applied to the Central Junta. The candid and open character of Quintana induces him to believe the same, in people who are something artfull to counterfeit it. So, as far as I can judge, was D^n^. Martin de Garay, his great friend. There is no argument in the world which would induce Quintana to believe Garay an intriguer, because he himself can never be one. Quintana has seen the Central Junta through Mr. Garay's descriptions, and therefore it is impossible that he may come to acknowledge my opinions thereupon, as correct. Although I can give this interpretation to so severe a censure as he gives about my paper, I am sorry to see my good friend adding, that my publication may excite dislike to the Spanish cause, when I only intended to excite indignation against a bad government, in order that the public opinion should be warned against any other of the same description, which might appear in the present circumstances. I would certainly have made the apology of those worthy members of the Junta who never connived to the mischievous purpose of the others, had I had an opportunity to do so at the time I wrote my first number. I pay the highest respect to Jovellanos' virtues and learning; but I would have appeared partial if, making his apology, I should omit to mention some others, who, though not so conspicuous in merit, are perhaps as innocent in the Junta's bad proceedings as he is. He chose, out of his principles of honour, to make his reclamations in secret: and when I examined the conduct of the Junta, I only could speak of what had appeared in the eyes of the people.

But I eagerly accept the opportunity which his manuscript, so kindly offered by your Lordship, affords me, to

give an account of his exertions in favour of the good principles. I will give an extract in my next number if I can call in time to Holland House, as I hope I shall be able to do. I repeat my professed veneration to your honourable friend, and I would feel extremely happy if I could contribute to restore the high opinion which he has always deserved, and which I could never be so wicked as to impair.

Infantado's paper will also find a place in my publication; but I long to see Venega's answer. I shall endeavour to be impartial; and therefore will suspend my judgement until I can see both one and the other's reasons.

I am, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Yours faithfully,

J. Blanco White.

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July 31, 1810.

My Lord,

I received your letter, together with one of the Duke of Infantado, enclosed in the account of his campaign. The Duke's letter is full of kind compliments to me upon the subject of my first number, and of fears with regard to the opposition that it was likely my publication would meet on the part of the Spanish Government.

Though I was determined to speak about the Cortes, which are lately convocated by the Regency, I had not my ideas set in order by the time I knew of the last decree, and, therefore, I promised some reflections upon this subject for my next number. It is indeed very difficult to give

seasonable advice upon the manner in which the Cortes ought to be assembled, and, when assembled, to proceed in the present circumstances. Nothing is said in the Decree about the Deputies from the Towns which are now in the hands of the French. I really do not know whether it would be more advisable to form the Cortes with the deputies of those parts of Spain where the people is at liberty to elect them; or whether they should be conditionally elected at Cadiz, as I understand is now the case. Would not the first method be more legal and popular? Would not the influence of the Government be suspected in the supplementary elections of the last? I hope you will have the goodness to let me know your opinion upon the subject, and to suggest me what you think most convenient in the present complicated circumstances.

I long to hear your opinion upon what I say in my 6th number about America. I assure you I have done every effort in my power to conquer my former propensity to theoretical principles of reform, in which I was rather too much imbibed to be cured entirely in the short space of five months, that I have been studying and admiring the practical wisdom of the English system of politics. I have endeavoured to spare the feelings of the Regency, whilst I have told them what I conceived to be the truth. In praising the moderation of the Revolutionists of Caracas, I only had in view to recommend that virtue. I am sure they ought not to have mentioned the word *Independence*; but the best remedy to oppose the influence of that word after it has been uttered is, I believe, to recommend by all means the allegiance to Ferdinand the 7th. This I have done in the last number, and I intend to insist very forcibly on it, in my next. Thus the Spanish Colonies will remain attached

to the Empire of Spain, and can find no objection to send their deputies to a general meeting of the kingdom, as this will not be against their *Domestic Independence*. However, the pride and ambition of the Spanish Government will, very likely, destroy this scheme, which can be only supported by moderation and forbearance. I would recommend the Regency to let the Americans call themselves independent from any government *ad interim* of the Peninsula, while they would acknowledge Ferdinand the 7th as their monarch. But I perceive a misunderstanding of the word *Representatives* of Ferdinand the 7th, which has misled all the Governments of Spain, and which Jovellanos almost foresaw in his Report to the Central Junta, when he stated that they ought to assume that only part of the King's power which was necessary to the liberation of the country. This misconception of their faculties will be a great obstacle to the reconciliation of the Regency with the Americans. The circumstances of the Colonies entitle them to have a share in the representation of Ferdinand the 7th, entirely independent from those who represent him in Europe. This the Regency will name a rebelion, which, in my opinion, could be turned into an act of indissoluble union between the people of the Old and New World.

I remain, my Lord,

Most faithfully yours,

J. Blanco White.

Aug. 28, 1810.

My Lord,

It was with the greatest pleasure I saw by your kind letter that my opinion upon the affairs of South America perfectly coincided with yours. As I am determined to write with the only purpose of doing good, as far as it lays in my power, I felt very uneasy after venturing to speak upon this delicate question, fearing always lest I had done some harm to either of the countries, which, very unluckily, we may call rivals at present. The arrival of our friend Arriaza increased my uneasiness; for notwithstanding that politics are not very particularly his province, his friendly animadversions (as he chose to style them) augmented my anxiety, and made me long for the relieve of approbation. This you were kind enough to bestow on me, and had so much the effect of inspiring me with confidence, that nothing, I assure you, will be able to distract me from the course I have once began.

But our wishes for the happiness of both Spaniards and Americans will never, I am afraid, be fulfilled. Neither of those countries are prepared to profit by a revolution. The absence of such obstacles as the reverses of war have thrown in the way of the Spaniards, might enable their countrymen in America to obtain a beneficial reformation, were they led by well-meaning and impartial men, and were it not the interest of many to oppose all their efforts. But I can neither trust the intentions of the leaders, nor hush my fears with regard to their opponents. That unhappy division of the casts empowers the dissenters to excite the fire of a civil war, which if ever takes place among people so discordant in manners, opinions, and political situation,

amongst numbers who will delight in carnage and plunder, never will be quenched but in floods of blood. I shall take every opportunity to warn them of their danger, although I am aware that remonstrances of this kind have no effect in such cases. The pride of the Europeans is so unconquerable in America, that no sort of danger will deter them from indulging their revenge.

The conduct of the English Cabinet has been very prudent in this case, and the Duke of Alburquerque has behaved in the most liberal manner, while his partner in the embassy was entreating the government to send an esquadron for the purpose of blockading Caracas and Buenos Ayres. However, I am sorry to say, the last very probably will prove the true interpreter of his government.

Would you think proper to give a translation of that pamphlet about the rules of debate in the House of Commons, which I had in my power for some time in Spain? Perhaps the Cortes would profit by it. If you are of this opinion, would you have the goodness to let me have a copy of the said pamphlet for a few days?

I am, my Lord, with the greatest respect,

Yours sincerely,

J. Blanco White.

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September 25, 1810.

My Lord,

I have been hard at work since I received the favour of your last; but I hope you will see very soon how much I have profited by your observations. I have only expressed what you point out in your remarks; however I have no doubt that they will be of more service in Spain than any pompous discourse upon Theories.

I don't know whether my journal has a great effect; what I may say is, that it makes a deal of noise in the free part of the Peninsula. Yesterday I received a number of letters from Portugal, asking for numbers, and assuring me of the great eagerness with which they are look for in that Kingdom. Romana, they tell me, caused the first discourse to be printed at Badajoz, and sold and distributed among the people. When he left the Town for the Army, the Junta of that place arraigned the Printer for having done so; but on his appealing to the general, the prosecution subsided. Meantime, I must inform you that the Regency has passed a note against me. This I know to a certainty. You can guess from this their inclination to establish the liberty of the press. Mr. Wellesley has spoken to me, and my determination has been to write a letter to the Marquis, giving him thanks for the protection he bestowed on my work, by ordering one hundred* copies, but giving up also my claim to the continuation of this favour, if it can give birth to the least misunderstanding. I will go on steadily; reason, cold reason, will be my language; but I will face those petty tyrants of the Regency even if I were to be reduced to the last corner of the earth. I hope this Government feels no inclination to molest me; but in such case I am confident from your goodness and friendship, you will direct me how to sustain my claims. I have now a certificate about my family, and I beg you will let me know which is the law in favour of the grandsons of British natives.

I request of you most eagerly to let me have your obser-

[* See vol. i. p. 188; where from memory the number is stated as two or three dozen.]

vations upon everything that you might think usefull to the cause of Spain, for which my interest increases, as the obstacles increase that oppose its happiness.

I am, my Lord,

Ever yours,

J. Blanco White.

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October 1, 1840.

My Lord,

I received in due time your esteemed letter, in which you had the goodness to state the two Acts of Parliament, upon which I might probably ground my claims to the rights of a British subject; for this as for all your kindness and friendship towards me, I will feel indebted to you for ever. It is my intention to take the advice of some eminent lawyer, for which purpose the information I owe to you will be of a great deal of service. I hope I shall never be in need to avail myself of such privileges, for I wont forget the *moderation* and *forbearance* you have taught me to insist upon; though I feel how difficult a task it is to keep within these limits, when my ennemies spare no kind of arms against me, and bestow upon my name and character every sort of abuse.

I long to hear your opinion about the sixth number of the Espanol. The number of official and interesting documents which I have published, prevented me from the pleasure to introduce some part of *Conciliator's* letters, as I was determined to do. But I hope there will be time enough to make use of that excellent production.

The affairs of America, as far as I conceive, are in a very

bad situation, and either the civil war will destroy every good prospect in that country, and excite a decided French party, or the Revolutionist shall be crushed, and the oppression carried to a more intolerable degree than ever was before. These are the effects of the proud ignorance of the Spanish Government.

As you do me the honour to take an interest in all my concerns, I take the liberty to inclose a copy of the letter which I wrote to Lord Wellesley about the *Espanol*. I hope it will meet with your approbation.

I remain, my Lord,
Yours most faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

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23rd October.

My Lord,

I was just about taking the pen to congratulate you upon the assembling of the Cortes, when I received the honour of your interesting letters. The moment I heard of this most glorious event, my mind was turned to you, and in the flow of feelings which overspread my heart, the anxious desire of sharing and witnessing your joy, was certainly very prominent. I fancied I could guess your opinions upon every particular, and after the perusal of your letters, am proud to find a remarkable coincidence of my very first sentiments, with those you have had the goodness to impart me. One of your opinions, I must avow, and a very important one, had escaped me; that is, upon the impropriety of Campmany's motion. The glitter of popularity had deceived me, and I thought it a bold step towards that longed for liberty which we could hardly believe as a possible

blessing in Spain. Your arguments are unanswerable, I confess. There is a real harm done to the country in depriving it from the services of the worthiest and best known characters. But don't you conceive a temporary and most important benefit arising from the popularity the Cortes must have gained by the adoption of this measure? The actual Cortes of Spain must endeavour to establish their influence upon the public opinion. The people of Spain, after the uninterrupted scene of corruption which has been so long before their eyes, have become suspicious in a high degree, and nothing but a conspicuous delicacy and disinterestedness will destroy the seeds of displeasure that would probably sprout after the first enthusiasm subsides. I should think that the rule *ne quid nimis*, the very great use of which I have learned from you in politics, might be dispensed with, in everything relating to put a stop to the corruption which has hitherto arisen in Spain from the anxious desire of obtaining a situation or employment. I would not dare to speak against this measure immediately after its being adopted, for fear of loosing the influence I may have among the friends of liberty. A few months will be sufficient to establish the credit of the Cortes, if they proceed as they have began: then, I can conceive, your arguments would appear in all their force and light, and an amendment might be proposed to the act, now passed, with an applause, that proves the best disposition of mind in all those who have bestowed it on the measure.

Notwithstanding my former objection to the two Chambers, I am pretty well cured of my *bonâ fide* Jacobinism, to agree upon the great use of this separation of the representatives of the people, in order to avoid the evils of precipitation and surprize. I further acknowledge the injustice

done to the Grandees, in not allowing them a representation in Cortes. My next Espanol is almost printed, and I can say but few words about these points; but I will endeavour to prepare the way to useful discussions. What they want first of all is rules of proceeding. I intend to insist upon this topic.

Mr. Bentham has written me a very polite letter, and made me a present of part of his work upon the Tactics of Popular Assemblies, which was printed as a specimen of the rest. I shall endeavour to find room for a short extract of his six rules of debate, which are very near the same as those of the House of Commons.

How is it that Quintana is not in the list of the Deputies?

I am intimately ackwainted to Zorraquin and Rodrigo, and I intend to write them a letter; but I scarcely have time, as over the Espanol I have always some little work from some friend or other, which takes the moments I could otherwise spare.

I am, my Lord,
Yours faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

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(Vol. I. p. 202—4.)

26th Oct. 1810.

My Lord,

Nothing but the kind interest you have the goodness to take for me could sooth the smartness of the wound I have received from a beloved hand, in that cruel libel published in the Observador. I really dont know what an honest man can answer to the enormous injuries contained in that

paper. My prevalent feeling is a kind of stupefaction, considering how has it been possible that my name should be published at Cadiz with the epithets of a monster, and a corruptor of the public morals, in a town crowded with my former friends. But now I am practically convinced that I had not one among them.

You will soon see my 7th number. I insist on my arguments, and only allow myself an allusion to the ill-treatment of some of my countrymen. There is even a new, and a very powerfull reason for the Cortes to decide the question in favour of the Americans: that is, the insurrection of the New Kingdom of Granada. I suppose you must have seen the proclamation of the people of S^ta^ Fe, published in the Morning Post of the 21st. It is a matter of surprize to me, to see this subservient Ministerial Paper hastening to forward this piece of information. I suppose the Ministers feel the necessity of liberal measures in this important affair.

I have seen Mr. Dumont. His conversation has been very consoling in my situation.

The papers you have had the goodness to send me have been of great service for my next number. I am sorry I have neither room, nor time, to say what occurs to me upon the Cortes. It will be always said in time if they proceed as they have begun.

Pray remember me to Lady Holland. I depend upon her pitying this poor Spanish Outlaw.

I remain, my Lord,
Yours faithfully,
J. Blanco White.

2, Carleton Place, St. Alban's St.

7th Nov.

My Lord,

I am very sorry I was at my Printer's when you did me the honour to call this morning.

I will begin to write about the Reglamento for the liberty of the press as soon as I can have an original copy in Spanish. Will you have the goodness to send it to me if you have one? The papers you did me the favour to lend me are now ready for you again, and I will send them back as soon as possible. Some other newspapers from Spain have arrived lately in town, if I am not mistaken, but I have seen none. My uneasiness about the liberty of the Press has increased when I have heard the names of some of the members comprising the Tribunal. Arguelles and his enlightened supporters must have been overwhelmed by the dreadfull influence of the Clergy. Have you heard of *Lasauca?* He was the man who, being *Regente* of Oviedo, imprissoned Jovellanos, and took him as a criminal through the streets of that town in the middle of the day. He was the Judgé appointed to pass sentence on the Vizcayans who rose against the tyrannical influence of the Prince of the Peace. Together with a man of this character, Riega, and the Bishop of Palencia, Bejarano—the first the prototype of ignorance and stubborness, the second of fanaticism—are chosen to support the liberty of the Press. And Quintana is with them! I long to see the names of the other members; but am almost sure that the bad party will be by far the strongest.

Have you seen a pamphlet lately published in London against me? It is a master piece of Mr. Arriaza's wit. I am entirely decided not to mention a word about such lampoons. To answer the injuries, and sarcasms with

which they abound, must be very tedious to my readers. As to reasons or arguments, they state nothing that I have not answered beforehand a thousand times. What can I say to people who are determined to see every thing upside down? What I am very sorry for is, the sad turn which the affairs of America have taken; it will be overflowed with blood.

I remain, with sincere respect,

My Lord,

Ever yours,

J. Blanco White.

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Edgeware Road, May 22nd, 1813.

My dear Lord Holland,

I live so much out of the world that I did not know you were gone to Brighton until this very moment, when I have received your letter. It is, indeed, exceedingly kind of you to remember me among the bustle of a watering-place, when I thus appear to forget you in my retirement. But I assure you that I have scarcely had time to take a walk in the fields for the sake of my health; such has been the number of translations which I have had to make this last month, besides the never-ending *Espanol*.—But as soon as this month is over, if you should still be at Brighton by the beginning of the next, I shall, positively, do myself the pleasure of paying you a visit: so that if I do not hear from you to the contrary, I shall be with you on the 2nd of June.

The political honesty of the *Liberales* is, in my opinion, doing away so fast that I shall wonder at nothing they may do to keep the power in their hands. Their vanity has no limits, and I cannot believe that they will quietly submit to

retire again into private life, or to hold any charge under the sway of others. What may be their plans I am not able to guess; but I don't expect to see the next *Cortes* fairly assembled. The good of the country and the dangers to which the Constitution is exposed, will be, no doubt, the pretext of their usurpation, and I do not doubt but that they still believe they have no other inducement but the establishment of liberty. However, I am convinced that they are thoroughly ruining the country. Spain cannot form a Republic, and those people have no other object in view. It is now one, in fact; but we begin to see the sad consequences of such a government. The country is in a state of anarchy: the majority of the people are very ready to give their *assent* to every Article of the Political Creed of the Cortes, but they will not lend their hands to any thing which they are desired to do. The natural indolence of the people has hitherto prevented popular commotions; but the parties are now running very high, and it is difficult to foretell what rancour and animosity will lead to. Do you know that the Anti-Anglican party has appeared with fresh vigour at Cadiz, I suspect under the protection of the new Government? I have just answered a most insolent and scandalous libel on the English Government, which has been published in the second number of a new journal called *El Espanol Libre*. The title makes me think that it is meant as a counter-poison against the *Espanol Esclavo en Londres*!

I perfectly agree in your opinion of the Duke of Infantado. He has more sense than all the other Grandees put together; but his indecision has made him unpopular; and with many excellent qualities, I fear he has not a friend. I am very glad to hear that the Dutchess has been gratified

with what was said in the Espanol about her son; and although I had no other merit in it but that of a mere translator, it really conveyed my opinion upon the subject, and I felt pleased at the opportunity which offered of showing that I only *regret* that he did not know me better.

I beg you will present to Lady Holland my grateful acknowledgment of her kind invitation, as well as my earnest wish of her speedy and perfect recovery.

Believe me, dear Lord Holland,

Most faithfully yours,

J. Blanco White.

# APPENDIX III.

## SOME PASSAGES OF HIS DIARY IN THE YEARS 1812-19.*

Nov. 12, 1812.

A very excellent friend of mine complained to me yesterday about a thing that the best characters are apt to bewail —the misfortune of having been often *misunderstood* and *misrepresented*. This misfortune may be traced, in my opinion, to an original fault, which, from its being connected with a good disposition of the heart, is very seldom noticed by those who labour under it. I mean an over communicative disposition—an eager desire of an intimate intercourse with every one who appears disposed to take some interest in our opinions and feelings. A heart thus disposed is very apt to fall into dangerous illusions respecting the persons of whom it will be desirous to make bosom friends. It is no wonder if it meets with many who make an ill use of that intimate confidence. But the great danger of that fond vanity which leads to disclose whatever we conceive to constitute the chief merit of our moral character, is to be found in the female sex. The best of women may be utterly ruined through the influence of that disguised and treacherous sort of vanity. Those who would blush at the idea of artfully drawing the attention of everybody upon their personal charms, will suspect no impropriety in taking the first

[* These extracts, too valuable to be omitted, could not be entered under their respective dates in the Sketch of his Mind in England without interrupting the Narrative. References are given to the corresponding periods in the Second Part of the work.]

opportunity of letting as many as they can into the secrets of their own souls, that they may admire their good qualities, and conceive for them what they imagine a pure and enthusiastic tenderness. Young girls should be inspired with a kind of moral bashfulness. They ought to be taught to hide from the eyes of men the secret charms of their souls, as they learn to veil those of their persons. Both should be treasured up with a mysterious and religious sort of feeling, for the happy man who is to be their lawful possessor. Let a decent veil be thrown over a heavenly heart, as one is laid over a blooming bosom. The existence of the hidden charms cannot be concealed—but strangers ought scarcely to be allowed to fix a curious eye upon the outward forms. The opposite conduct in a woman is very easily and naturally misinterpreted. It is, in a moral way, allowing a man the liberty (if I may use the comparison) of seeing her at her toilet.

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Bayswater, March 23, 1813.

*The Primroses.*

(See Vol. I. p. 198.)

As I got up this morning, and was looking at the fields opposite my window, delighted with the sight of the tender and pure verdure spread over them, and enlivened by the beams of the early sun, which had risen without a cloud, I was agreably struck with the voice of a woman, who sang along the road something that might be taken for a little air. When she came in view, I perceived that she had a basket full of flowers, and that she was going to sell them in town. My heart is still beating, sweetly beating, from

the impression which the sight of the flowers made upon me. They were primroses, new primroses, so blooming, so fresh, and so tender, that it might be said that their perfume was perceived by the eye. A sudden tear started in mine, and my heart was instantly overflowed with mixed sensations of tenderness, melancholy, and pleasure—the pleasure of longings and regret.

There is, perhaps, no man more quick than I to the effect of certain associations; those particularly which remind me of the checks which have opposed my affections without the least intermission. God knows that my soul has desired nothing but what is absolutely consistent with the first duties of virtue. I never remember to have felt the least allurement in riches, power, or splendour. Nature and its charms have been the object of my most ardent love from the earliest part of my life. My heart glows at the thought of every thing that reminds me of the endearments and charities of human nature. My tears flow at this moment with an inexpressible feeling of melancholy and regret. I consider how innocently, how easily, I might be a very happy man; and how my circumstances have debarred me from the enjoyment of every object which is dear to my heart. This thirst for love which nature has given me, while my fate has doomed me to pass through life without one with whom to share my affections, is one of the most exquisite sorts of pain which I have known in the course of my life. Though I hope to have fulfilled my duties towards those who are connected with me, either by the ties of nature or friendship, it has been with a certain degree of pain and unhappiness. The glow of my affection in the performance of those duties has ever been checked and crossed by the thought of my wretchedness, in not being

allowed to bestow part of my sensibility on the objects to which they were so forcibly directed by nature—a wife and children. I have loved, but alas! how embittered by every painful circumstance that can distress a soul like mine. I have to envy the meanest mechanic who can go out with his little family on such a delicious day as this, and pick a bunch of new primroses from the hedges, while his wife and children are enjoying the fresh air in the next lawn.

Providence, however, is wiser than what our short and dim sight can allow us to perceive. It has been the hand of Providence that placed me on this barren tract, that I may work my way into a better world. To that I now look up with confidence: that consoling hope has shone anew on my soul, when it appeared that its light was extinguished for ever. Blessed be the hand which has worked this wonder, by means that no man could foresee!

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March 26th, 1813.

*The Nun.*

(See Vol. I. p. 124.)

The day arrived when M. F. was to take the veil, and like that of a wedding, under the name and festivities of which the gloominess of this ceremony is studiously concealed, the house was all bustle from very early in the morning. Nothing was talked of but the *Bride*. She was up before daylight, in order to go to Church and receive the Sacrament, for the whole morning was scarcely enough for the long operations of the toilet. The milliner and the head-dresser were already in attendance when she came back from Church with her mother. She was to be dressed

in the most splendid possible way, her head and bosom were to be decked with diamonds; in a word, she was to appear, according to her mother's expression, *as it became the dignity of the Bridegroom.*

My cousin was the only person in the house who was not to be seen running up and down, and busy about nothing at all, like the rest. He had retired early to his study, and bolted the door, as he usually did. I longed to speak to him, and try to dispel the gloom which, upon his getting up that morning, I had observed more visible than ever. He seemed to be desirous of seeing me, for he ran with the greatest eagerness to open the door when I rapped it in the manner which he well knew. "I am glad you came," said he, "for I cannot read, nor write, nor think, and can hardly bear myself. I wish I was on the banks of the Ohio: it is worse to live in this country than in the forests of North America, even among the savages. Had I been born there, I should have had no means of cultivating my mind, and would eat my enemies, or be eaten by them, without even suspecting that either was an evil. But here, look here—(and he pointed to the book-shelves)—can there be a more exquisite, a more refined torture, than that of being surrounded by these books in your closet, and hearing what is going about in our house! Horrid, indeed! my dear friend. I cannot bear the idea of the cruel sacrifice which is going to take place to-day. My dearest sister, the only one now left me, is going to follow the steps of the other, who fell a victim to the same fanaticism—that fanaticism which is now hurrying away this deluded girl from the bosom of an old, infirm mother, from the arms of an excellent, goodnatured father, and the society of a brother, who is already doomed, by the laws of this more than barbarous

society, to live without a family of his own. I had no prospect of enjoying any domestic endearments but in the company of this sister who now forsakes me for ever."—Tears filled up his eyes.

"But who can save me, my dear cousin, from the horrid torture that awaits me this morning?" exclaimed he, after a short pause, in one of those fits of despair into which his keen feelings now and then betrayed him. "Must not I appear at the altar, the minister of the execrable superstition of which my sister is the victim? Must not I perform the dreadful ceremony which is to tear her from the arms of her near relations for ever? Must not I seal the stone of the grave into which she is hurrying, and deliver her into the hands of tyrants who, like hell, will never let go their prey?"

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Sunday, December 28th, 1817.

I hope I am sincerely thankful to my heavenly Father for a circumstance which has taken place this afternoon. Dr. H. came to see me, and on looking at my books entered upon a Theological subject. I suspected him of infidelity; but his modesty and good nature encouraged me to express myself without any fear of drawing upon me a disagreeable and useless dispute. To my great delight I found him in a most promising state of mind—just in the transition from Deism to Christianity—nay, I should say he is more on the side of Christianity than he is aware; his heart is certainly moved, and he wishes to dispel his doubts. Some observations which I owe to my own experience, and which, by God's blessing, may be of great use in the progress of his inquiries, he seemed to be struck with. My great hope of his final

conversion to Christ is grounded on his practice of praying every night before he goes to bed.—

How grateful I feel that upon this his holy day, when I was lamenting my being deprived of the benefit of attending public worship, he has afforded me this opportunity of being instrumental in stirring up the fire which begins to be kindled in the soul of that worthy young man.—

Thou knowest, O Lord Jesus, how it grieves me to think of the many instances in which I have proved a stumbling-block to my acquaintance! Thou knowest how I am terrified and oppressed with the thought, that perhaps some of them have already perished,—and that their blood may be found upon my hands. Prevent, O Lord, this great calamity; as thou art powerful to do it, save them, O Lord! But add to this another great mercy towards this wretched sinner—the comfort and joy of bringing many to thy flock, and finally joining them all in thy kingdom!

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December 30th, 1817.

(Vol. I. p. 316.)

I have written to my friend Bishop, and communicated to him my views on *Trinidad*. My mind, however, is at times oppressed with the idea of the work I shall have to undertake, if my offers are accepted. I have had recourse to prayer. I acknowledge that in my offering for a preacher of the gospel at Trinidad, my restlessness of character may have had a great share. I cannot bear this idle life. I wish to be employed. Yet I prayed, in great earnest, before I took any step on the subject. It has nothing in itself to allure me, and I am sure it never offered itself to my mind in any attractive shape. I think I have engaged

from a desire to be useful. After all, I can do nothing but humble myself before God, and throw myself on his merciful Providence, that he may dispose of me as it seemeth best in his eyes.

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December 31st, 1817.

(See Vol. I. p. 339.)

Two hours hence we shall have begun another year. How have I spent the one now expiring? I have suffered a good deal in it. The first half I passed in trouble and agitation at Holland House; struggling with my aversion to the place I held; now thinking that I might go on with a certain degree of comfort; now nearly distracted by the indescribable misery which the whole system, and the nature of my situation, did almost uninterruptedly produce on my mind.

At last I broke my chains on the 27th* of June. The time I spent with Bishop and J—— was not, I hope, lost upon me. I think my spirit was refreshed in the company of those two pious men. My intimacy with Bishop was confirmed by living together; this I consider as a great blessing; he is certainly one of the best Christian Ministers I know: a most amiable man: a sincere friend, an excellent companion. My health, however, grew worse every day. My temper was ruffled. I grew impatient, I could not bear my wandering life, without a corner in the world which I could call my own My stay at Gaddesden† did not produce any amendment either in my health, or in my harrassed feelings. Nothing can exceed the kindness of my friends Mr. and Mrs. Carle-

[* Vol. I. p. 308.] [† Vol. I. p. 312.]

ton. Yet I was anxious to come to London, that I might live in my own lodgings. Though my nervous irritability had grown to a painful degree when I was at Gaddesden,—and I have to blush for having on several occasions, shown to my good friends how peevish and childish my vanity can make me when hurt in the least; I have some reason to hope that their excellent disposition afforded me some opportunity of being instrumental, through Divine grace, in forwarding their religious progress. I could evidently perceive the grace of God at work in their hearts. May God bless and prosper them. Amen.

Since my arrival in London, on the 27th of October, though I have suffered considerably from illness, my mind has, I thank God, grown more composed and tranquil. I have felt some warmth of devotion: my faith seems, at times, to be more lively than I can ever remember it before. After the last severe attack, my health seems to improve. Perhaps God will have mercy on me, and will grant me the blessing of some strength which I may employ in the service of his Gospel. I think I can, and do sincerely pray to him, that he may never grant me any temporal advantage if I am to use it against the eternal interests of my soul.

May the new year bring to me an increase of grace—many opportunities to make amends for my past follies and wickedness—great patience and perfect resignation to the will of God in whatever trials it may bring upon me; and if it is to be the last of my life, may the day which is to put an end to it, be the beginning of an eternal and happy existence in the kingdom of God, through the merits of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen, Amen.

January 1st, 1818.

I prayed this morning with some degree of heartfelt earnestness. I devoted the whole morning to pious reading, intending it as a sort of first fruits of the year which I wished to offer up to God. I was not very well; and though I had intended to be at Church in time for the Sacrament, it had commenced before the usual time, and I was disappointed of that great comfort.

Dr. H. called this afternoon. I might have turned the conversation to some good purpose. But just as I was beginning to speak about Newcombe's Observations, a motto from Lucretius which he uses, engaged me in a useless conversation on that author. I hope my foolish vanity was not much concerned in this. I am very sorry to have lost a good opportunity of saying something that might be of use to my friend.

I have to accuse myself, too, of having passed a most distressed and miserable object—a poor negro in tattered rags, whom I saw thrown upon the pavement near Whitehall. I passed him, and though my heart smote me I did not go back to give him something. It was owing more to awkwardness and confusion of mind than unfeelingness, for upon reflection I could hardly eat my dinner from compassion for that miserable object, and remorse for my want of proper and well-regulated charity.

I have suffered a good deal this evening from internal agitation. I am pretty sure it arises from the state of my digestive organs.

May God forgive me whatever I have done amiss, and grant me grace to continue in his service for ever!—Lord Jesus! in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded!

Jan. 2nd.

I walked to the Horse Guards, in order to relieve the poor Negro; but I could not find him.

The Number for December of the Missionary Register came this morning. I have been reading in it this evening. The work which Providence is carrying over the face of the globe is wonderful indeed! And must I be idle all the while? Oh Lord Jesus! I know that I am not worthy to share the glory of spreading thy Gospel. But Thy strength is always perfected in weakness.—I really blush at the idea of my useless existence, when I read of the exertions of so many Ministers of the Gospel as are spreading its blessings among the most remote and savage nations.

My present duty, however, is to submit with entire resignation to the circumstances in which Providence has placed me. "I must follow Providence; not force it." While my health continues weak and uncertain, and while no opening is made for employment suitable to my circumstances, my only duty is to go on quietly and without repining.

May God give me grace absolutely to resign myself into his hands!

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Jan. 6, 1818.

The excellent Archdeacon Potts called to tell me that he had spoken to the Bishop of London on the subject of Trinidad. I am to wait upon the Bishop next Friday. What can I say to him? I intend to devote the greater part, if not the whole, of Thursday to prayer and humiliation before God, that his Providence may direct my way; for I am in

absolute perplexity. I think I am sincere in my wishes of being useful: yet I do not think that my faith is strong enough to support me in the work which I have in contemplation.—I shall have, however, done some good, if, through my suggestions on this subject, some more able person should be sent to promote the interests of Christianity in that, I fear, neglected island.

Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!

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Jan. 7, 1818.

(See Vol. I. p. 335.)

*A Memorandum to be left with the Bishop of London, concerning my views on Trinidad.*

The Rev. J. Blanco White, a native of Seville in Spain, formerly his Catholic Majesty's Chaplain, being desirous to promote the knowledge of the Gospel according to the articles and discipline of the Church of England, of which he has for some years been a member, humbly conceives that his peculiar circumstances might make him a useful minister at the island Trinidad, which by the last treaty has been ceded to Great Britain.

1st. It seems that there is no provision made for the religious instruction of the English population of Trinidad. The Missionary Register mentions only two Dissenting preachers in the Island, supported, one by the Wesleyan Methodists, and the other by the *London Missionary Society*.

2ndly. The Spanish part of the population of Trinidad must be, in all probability, involved in ignorance and superstition. The Spanish clergy of the Island, independently of

the errors of their Church, may be supposed to be now degraded below the common level of their class, by the absolute want of all Ecclesiastical discipline in which they have been for years.

3rdly. Mr. Blanco White, in such a state of things, seems, under Divine blessing, peculiarly qualified to promote the spiritual concerns of both classes, English and Spaniards. As a clergyman he might at once open a church or chapel of the Establishment for the English population. In the course of some time, and after making himself acquainted with the state of the Spanish population, Mr. B. W., either by the publication of religious tracts in Spanish, or (as there is already a Spanish translation of the Common Prayer Book) by doing service, and preaching alternately in English and in Spanish, might offer an opportunity to his Majesty's subjects who speak the Spanish language, of comparing the doctrines of our English Church with those of Rome, and freely to make their choice.

4thly. He might promote the establishment of Schools on the British System of Education.

5thly. He might open a correspondence with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, upon the spiritual wants of the Island.

Mr. Blanco White, though born a Spaniard, is, by the benefit of an Act of 13 Geo. III. c. 21, a British subject to all intents and purposes, *as long as he resides within the realm*: and he conceives that he would be protected in that capacity in any part of his Majesty's dominions against Spanish *persecution*.

Jan. 16, 1818.

(Vol. I. p. 337.)

I called at Holland House to see the little girls, and afterwards on Mr. Wilberforce. Mr. W. seemed to be glad to see me. I told him the result of my application to the Bishop of London. Lord Bathurst's answer appeared to him very strange. In the course of our conversation, I mentioned the melancholy state of all the Spanish countries in point of religion. Mr. Wilberforce said he should be glad if any one should undertake the translation into Spanish of *Paley's Evidences*. I answered him that I had begun it at Oxford, and had done about half of the first volume, but that I had given it up in despair of its ever being useful to my countrymen, as I was sure the Inquisition would not allow it to be read. He observed, however, that it was extremely desirable that the translation should be ready, in order to watch the first opportunity of sending it over whenever there was an opening made. I could not but be struck with the force of this observation, and I accused myself of an unpardonable remissness in the execution of a work, to which I may say I am more evidently called than to any other which I have either in hand or in contemplation. I have always felt a very strong reluctance to every thing that will oblige me to write in Spanish. It arises from pure vanity and conceit, and it is nothing but the fear of corrupting my English, by reviving the now almost lost habits of thinking in my native language. I did not, however, hesitate a moment in both forming and expressing a resolution, immediately to resume the work. Consequently, on my returning home, I prepared my manuscript, and fell to work in it after dinner. I have employed two hours in it. I propose translating for an hour every day—and as

this is a work which I undertake for a purely religious object, I shall make no scruple of devoting to it a great part of every Sunday, in which my habitual indisposition may prevent my going to church. May God purify my intentions, and prevent the most remote and indistinct human views from mixing with those of which I am conscious, and which I wish to make exclusively my motives.

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Jan. 24, 1818.

My health has been very fair to-day. I wish most gratefully to thank my heavenly Father for the respite. I have, however, felt that mean, slavish feeling which seems to have been common among the heathen—a secret, indistinct fear that the Deity is jealous of our happiness—a dread of too much giving oneself up to the enjoyment of an incipient blessing, or acknowledging it openly, for fear of having the cup dashed from your lips. I have prayed against it. I wish gratefully to acknowledge every abatement or respite of my sufferings (which after all are not like the severe trials which much better people than myself endure), and to feel ready either to submit to a relapse, or to improve a recovery to the glory of my Saviour. I humbly implore his grace, to behave in that temper of mind.

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Jan. 30, 1818.

Though not quite so well as the two preceding days, I have been in very tolerable good health. I have finished my day's reading with Bishop Watson's first sermon against Atheism and Infidelity. It has moved me to tears! He was a man of a very powerful understanding,

and evidently of very sound piety, though not of that devotional cast which is commonly called seriousness. He was, however, *serious* indeed, in the true sense of that word. It is in books of that kind that I find the greatest satisfaction. My faith is strengthened by them, and my devotional feelings increase, I humbly hope, with the assurance and certainty of my belief.

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Feb. 14, 1818.

(Vol. I. p. 336.)

In the account of my studies, I find I have this week employed no more than fourteen hours and a half. So many little things are to be settled in my new lodgings, that my mind is quite abroad, and I even miss that patient and quiet disposition which is necessary for any serious literary pursuit. Were I to engage in the business of active life, I fear I should find it difficult to sit down quietly to any dry and laborious sort of study.

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Feb. 16, 1818.

The supply of money which I have received from Spain has made me relapse into the habits of expense beyond my means. I have this day spent a pound in books, without which I might do perfectly well. I have sent others to be bound, which might have gone on in boards. The expense of furnishing my rooms will be greater than what I expected. Thank God, I do not think that I am in immediate danger of running into debt; but still I ought to exert myself more than I do in favour of the indigent. May God enlighten and support me to do my duty.

Feb. 21st, 1818.

Mr. B. called this morning. I requested him to take part of my translation of Paley, in order to correct it, as he had offered to do. This led into a conversation on the Evidences of Religion, in which he appeared to me in a very favourable light. I had taken him to be a conceited unbeliever; and one who absolutely despised Religion as a fable not worth a moment's attention. But I had done him great injustice. He is what I should call a *devout* Deist. His unshaken belief in the existence of a benevolent God, his intimate persuasion that the Deity hears the prayers that are addressed to him by his creatures; his earnest desire, accompanied by prayer, of finding a sufficient ground for embracing Christianity; produced a strong effect upon my mind. I said to him, in the words of our Saviour, "thou art not far from the kingdom of God." I might have added; "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." I trust, however, that he will do so. The hand of God appears visibly in his state of mind. His faith in God was to me a matter of deep humiliation. He spoke of the existence and Providence of God with all the marks of the deepest conviction, wondering (and certainly with great reason), what madness could drive men into the absurdities of Atheism.—

How can I lift up my eyes to heaven! O God, merciful Father, have mercy on me for the sake of Jesus Christ, thy Son!

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Sunday, March 1st, 1818.

It has pleased God to turn into a source of suffering what I anxiously longed for as a spring of consolation. I

ventured to St. James's just at the beginning of the Sacrament service. My complaint was troublesome, as it will always be whenever my mind is agitated with the fear of its symptoms. I was a long time walking up and down till the sermon was over; and the conflict between my fears of being taken ill, and my desire of receiving the Sacrament, worked me into a miserable state of nervousness. When I entered the church I was extremely agitated; every word filled my eyes with convulsive tears, and my whole body was in constant motion. The affecting nature of the service, and my efforts to fix my mind on what I was doing, reduced me to such a miserable state, that when I came home I was almost distracted. My ideas have been confused the whole evening, and I feel quite exhausted at this moment.

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July 30, 1818.

(Vol. I. p. 343—7.)

Religion seems to me to stand in the system of Providence as the greatest of all trials. My mind is agitated with doubts on every side. I cannot relish the Scriptures. Yet, I thank God, I feel not the most remote desire of setting my understanding above them, or casting away my faith in Christ.—God forbid. I am perfectly blind—but I know that the Sun of Righteousness is shining in full blaze before me. I shall see it and rejoice in its light, as soon as it shall please God to open my eyes.

The occasion of opening this book has been this. I met the Rev. Mr. Mitchel, who told me he intended to call upon me, and engaged to meet me at my lodgings in the course of the afternoon. I prayed to God that this inter-

view might be for the good of my soul, as was that which I had with him at Brighton.—

A few hints and expressions of Mr. Mitchel affected my heart in such a way as to induce me to fall upon my knees, as soon as he left the room. I have humbly implored the assistance of God's grace, that I may not be cast away. May the divine spirit dispel the clouds that darken my soul!

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Aug. 10, 1818.

I thank God my prayers were not rejected. I have been much more easy in my mind. I hope my love to God is sincere. Though my doubts on several points are not dispelled, I feel a very strong assurance that through the grace of God, no argument, no doubt, can separate me from the love of Christ.

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Monday, Jan. 11, 1819.

(See Vol. I. p. 364—7.)

Blessed be God who has given such goodness to men! My friend C. has melted my heart. He told me he had just finished Taylor on Atonement with great pleasure: that he had misunderstood me. We entered freely upon the subject; but without the least spirit of contention, and in the way that Christian inquiry should be carried on. He at last took my hand and kissed it, as if he had been unfair to me in the course of this unfortunate misunderstanding, and he wished in that way to express his sorrow for any pain he had given me. Thanks be to God, who has not allowed me to indulge a single harsh thought against my excellent friend. I should at this moment feel miserable if

I had been guilty of such injustice towards him. I have, nevertheless, a considerable weight upon my mind, from the doubt whether I have used some degree of dissimulation on the Unitarian question.* But I expressly told him my persuasion that no abstract point disputed among sincere Christians can be an indispensable condition for salvation; and gave him to understand that I proceeded in my scriptural inquiries with a view to dispel doubts which deprived me in a great degree of the comforts arising from faith in God through Jesus Christ. He seemed perfectly to understand my motives and my views. I thank God that he has dispelled the cloud interposed for a while between my friend's esteem and myself; and humbly beg that he will always make me worthy of being the friend of such a man.

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*To the Rev. W. Bishop.*

[Written on Jan. 14, 1819, but not sent.]

My dear Bishop,

The doubt how to perform the duty which I am going now to fulfil has for some time given me great uneasiness. Your last letter, however, will not allow me any more to put off the dreaded moment. For if I should be doomed to lose any part of your esteem, by laying at once the state of my mind before you, I should, by the omission of this act of sincerity, be really unworthy of that *esteem* to the preservation of which I feel so painfully alive.

* Though I perceive myself to be a decided anti-Trinitarian according to the Athanasian doctrines, yet I cannot say that I have embraced either Arianism or Unitarianism. I am inclined to think that subject is such as that I shall never be able to form a settled opinion upon.

The inclosed papers contain extracts from my private Journal, no part of which has ever been read by any of my friends. It is but just that he, who is inferior to none in my affection, and who is the only one sufficiently qualified to be acquainted with all the workings of my mind, without any probable danger to his spiritual peace and joy in believing, should be privileged in this point among my bosom friends.

I must add to the contents of those papers, that I am neither an Athanasian, nor an Arian, nor a Unitarian. After a careful examination of this Theological question, I find that the authority of the Scriptures (for I have confined myself to ascertaining the *fact* of which of these systems is therein contained) cannot be so fully brought to bear either for or against any of the opinions which divide the Church, as to persuade me that I should no more listen to those whose tenets I may now and then feel inclined absolutely to reject.

The peculiar circumstances of my agitated life may to a certain degree account for the struggles which have produced the result I now commit to your candour. But they are, with me, a very strong reason not to carry my love of sincerity beyond what may be necessary to avoid positive dissimulation. You know, my dear friend, that before I had any reason to refuse a second subscription to the Articles, I was determined never to accept preferment. As to communion with the Church in which it pleased God to call me to the hopes of salvation through his Son, I not only think that I may continue in it without hypocrisy, but am convinced that unless the most clear reasons should compel me to a separation, it is my duty not to expose my *Faith in Christ* to the obloquy which any external change

would produce. Besides, I do not at present know a Church which I should prefer to that of which I have subscribed myself a member. My love for the pure vein of Christian piety which runs through the Prayer Book is not diminished by my strong doubts on other points. The Christian dispensation has, from the beginning, been carried on in the midst of controversy and doubt. Why should I, who am so conscious of the danger of error, refuse my assistance in the propagation of a form of Christianity which stands so high in the Universal Church for learning, and for true and genuine piety?

It is not without considerable fatigue that I have thus far been able to lay before you the present state of my mind. I must only add (with a view if possible to diminish the pain and concern which this disclosure may give you) that in the hard struggle which I have lately gone through, *prayer* and a sense of my own weakness have constantly attended my studies.

My health continues without any great improvement; but of this in my next.

Whatever may be the change which this letter may produce as to your opinion on my *judgment*, I trust it must confirm you in the assurance of the affectionate and sincere friendship of,

Yours ever,

J. B. W.

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January 16.

My fears of disturbing my dear friend on points of such importance to him as those which I attack in the extracts I intended to send with my letter, decided me against the

determination I had taken of laying before him the present state of my mind. In that act of openness and sincerity towards my dear friend, the leading motive was a desire to show myself incapable of dissimulation. But is it not a higher duty to preserve my friend's peace of mind, even at the expense of appearing to him in a less favourable light, if my present silence should ever assume the appearance of dissimulation? My friend B. is a man of strong and sound judgment; a thinking man of the greatest candour. It is very true that his attachment to the Church is cemented by the most settled associations; still, his mind might dwell too much upon arguments which I conceive to be very strong. He might be harrassed with doubts; his benevolent life might be deprived of the pleasures he now enjoys in his ministerial occupations; and who knows but that I might at last bring upon him a most dreadful struggle between his most solemn engagements and his high sense of duty? I tremble at the mere possibility of such an event, and thank God that the doubt about the propriety of what I was going to do occurred to my mind in time to prevent the danger.

Now it so happened, that this morning Mr. B—— called to see me, and the conversation taking a réligious turn, I felt a great desire to show him my *Facts and Inferences*,* knowing that he is prevented from embracing Christianity from the unconquerable aversion produced on his mind by *Theological Systems*, in which he has always seen it enveloped. The effect my observations had upon his mind was astonishing. I did not hesitate to offer him a copy of the

[* An argument to prove that Christian salvation does not require a belief in *Articles*: fundamentally the same as his Treatise on Heresy and Orthodoxy, published sixteen years afterwards.]

little Catechetical Examination. I enjoined him secrecy as to the author, from the fear of obloquy which my peculiar circumstances could bring upon Religion. But as I am sure, from my own experience, and the knowledge I have of unbelievers, that some might be brought to Christ by removing difficulties I am strongly persuaded do not belong to Christianity, I really cannot conceive that there can be any danger in allowing that Paper to go into the hands of those who are likely to read it with any degree of interest. Those whose religious feelings are intimately blended with any of the prevailing scholastic systems, will look upon the Paper with abhorrence. It is only such as are inclined to Christianity, and who have no idea of its being independent of those tenets which make their understanding revolt, that will be disposed to listen to my observations. And what harm can there be in making, say, a Unitarian from a Deist? Is there nothing gained in embracing the Gospel, in acknowledging Christ as Lord and Master? Suppose I should be in error; suppose a Deist should by any means embrace Christianity upon the lowest possible admission of its doctrines;—would that approach to Christ put *him* in worse condition, or give him a less chance of finding out the doctrines of the Trinity, Atonement, &c. than he had before? Certainly not. Let us therefore divest ourselves of that narrow spirit which will rather see a man continue a *heathen*, than turn Christian of a different denomination from our own.

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March 2, 1819.

I have ventured to write to my friend Bishop upon the painful subject of my change of opinion.—I thought that,

by requesting him to give up the idea of trying to obtain for me an honorary degree, I should remove my most pressing motive for acquainting him with the present state of my mind. I alleged my want of health: that such an honour would be little availing to me, as I neither wished to act as a Clergyman, nor found it possible to establish myself at Oxford, where I might have enjoyed the gratification of belonging to the University. But my friend's kindness baffled my well-meant artifice. He answered that he would not desist, and that if he failed in his object he would feel the satisfaction of having done what he thought justice to me.—In these circumstances I could not remain silent. Even if subscription to the Articles should not be a requisite for an honorary degree, which I think it is not, could I allow my friend to proceed in his endeavours under a misconception? And though his candour may prevent any diminution of his esteem towards me, would that be the case among all those whose votes he must have asked in my favour?—I have, therefore, fulfilled a painful duty. I have disclosed to him the fact that I have changed my opinions concerning *the Trinity*. As I greatly feared to disturb his *peace in believing*, I did not enter into any particulars. But that I might sooth the pain which I was sure the information would give him, I added—what, I hope, is true—that I had proceeded in my enquiries in Christian humility and sincerity.

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1819—March 3.

Ninth anniversary of my arrival in England.

O Lord God, my Creator and Heavenly Father, whose Providence has mercifully watched over me, and by the

most unexpected means delivered me from the degrading tyranny under whose influence I grew up, leading me to this privileged country, where Thou didst open my eyes to the light of Thy Revelation, I thank Thee, O Father, for this inestimable blessing. I thank Thee for having provided for my subsistence, and given me friends who are concerned for my welfare, and who fill up the place of my dear relations. Grant, O Lord, that I may prove finally faithful to Thee, and that so merciful a display of Thy goodness may not be lost upon me. Defend me, O Lord, from sin. Increase my faith in Thee, through my blessed Redeemer. May I be instrumental in the diffusion of true Christianity; and may I live in such an absolute subjection to Thy will, that men may see the power of Thy grace in my behaviour, and glorify Thee, by following the precepts of Thy Son, my Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

# APPENDIX IV.

## SUNDAY LETTERS.

*To the Rev. John H. Thom.*

I.

July 10, 1836.

My dear Friend,

As I am about to give you the Memoirs of John Woolman, that, before you take them to Woodcroft Cottage, with my thanks, as you kindly offered to do, you may at the least look the book over, I shall state briefly the result of the attention which I have given to that work.

Autobiographies are instructive, almost without exception, provided that the reader knows how to study mankind, for, even when the account is written under the influence of vanity or some other passion, it will afford opportunities of studying the workings of the heart and mind in a state of transient or settled moral disease. But when such a man as John Woolman undertakes an account of himself, we may be sure that the very bottom of his heart will be open before our eyes, exactly as it was before his own. It is true that both the writer and the reader must see the workings of the individual human soul described, through a medium containing sources of visual distortion and obscuration; for the narrator must have seen himself and all his actions through that more or less coloured glass which every man's prejudices interpose between every thing and his intellectual vision; but, as the prejudices and passions of the reader can scarcely ever be identical with those of the writer, there

is the greatest probability that the delusions of the latter will generally be apparent to the former, merely from the circumstance that he is placed in a different position.—But I must hasten to my subject—the impression I have received from the book in question.

You are aware that I consider the Quakers, in the early days of their society, and, indeed, till the influence of the other religious denominations around them disturbed the clear view of the principle adopted by George Fox, as superior to all the other Reformers in their knowledge of the true nature of the Gospel. The Quakers alone understood the whole meaning of Jesus's declaration that "the true worshippers should worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth:" they alone perceived that Christianity was not intended by Jesus to be dependent on any external authority whatever; but that he left his disciples to the guidance of the Spirit of Truth. Even in the perception of Jesus's meaning, as consigned to that figurative expression, the Quakers appear to me infinitely superior to the generality of Divines; for the latter have almost unanimously supposed that Jesus alluded to an invisible person, whom they call the Holy Ghost; but the primitive Quakers, in spite of the mass of theological prejudices which externally surrounded them, avoided, as by a rational instinct, the metaphysics of the Schools, and looked for the Spirit of which Jesus spoke, within themselves. Here, however, they were misled by that love of the miraculous which will be the last mental infirmity that true Christianity will conquer. The sincere Quakers conceived that they were the privileged subjects of a direct, personal, and miraculous revelation; and by admitting this supposition as a matter of incontrovertible consciousness, they opened themselves to all the extravagances

of enthusiasm. Yet, as what they often mistook for a supernatural voice within them was that true derivation of God's light, that ray of the eternal Reason which dwells in every man,—and as they cultivated that holiest of faculties by the means pointed out by Jesus himself, namely, purity of heart and that charity which divests man of selfishness, their enthusiasm was generally subdued in the very first growth. Add to this the powerful effect of awakened prudence in a society whose members were bound to submit to the sense of the majority,—a sense usually originating in the intimate knowledge of each other. Indeed, this predominant influence of the practical Reason, which I consider as a necessary result of the natural temper which would lead certain individuals to join the primitive Quakers, and must have been transmitted through successive generations as a result of moral discipline and example, is, as it appears to me, the origin of the invidious, popular description of them, which is conveyed in the expression *Sly Quaker*.

That John Woolman was under the partial influence of real enthusiasm, I believe you will not doubt when you read his account of himself. There are two instances, one of dreaming and another of feverish delirium, which he evidently gives as supernatural effects. In his benevolent, though useless, visit to the Indians, he was excited enough to believe that some of the people he addressed would be made to understand what he said, in spite of their ignorance of the English language. In one or two cases of severe illness the habits of his mind led him into the notion that the workings of his fevered brain deserved to be recorded as prophetical. Such passages, given, as they are, with the utmost simplicity of heart, are very instructive to those who, like myself, feel constantly attracted by the study of

the human mind. In these unsophisticated records I can discover the clearest analogies, both of thought and expression, by which much that superstition makes mysterious may be satisfactorily explained.

Having ventured so far to speak of what I conceive to be John Woolman's weaknesses, I am now about to enter upon the more satisfactory employment of bearing witness to the high qualities of his head and heart. The great characteristic of his mind is practical reason; that of his heart, true benevolence and its necessary consequence, rational self-denial. It is a most remarkable fact, that if the substance of Woolman's book was divested of the peculiar phraseology of the Quakers, and if, instead of the name *Christ*, Conscience or the Leading Divine Principle was employed, you might pass it as a work of the later Stoics. I will only quote one passage.

"There is a Principle, which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages hath had different names; it is, however, pure, and proceeds from God.—It is deep, and inward, confined to no forms of religion, nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root, and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren, in the best sense of the expression. Using ourselves to take ways which appear most easy to us, when inconsistent with that purity, which is without beginning, we thereby set up a government of our own, and deny obedience to him, whose service is true liberty."—*Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*, p. 323.

This and similar passages, which one might take as translated from Marcus Aurelius himself, are to me of the deepest interest. When I find a man totally deficient in learning, and even in common education, rising to this

moral sublimity merely by giving himself up conscientiously to the guidance of the principle proclaimed to the world by Jesus, I have a more convincing proof of the divine origin of his mission than any related miracle could furnish me with. Many, I am aware, will condemn such a view as totally opposed to Christianity. Unfortunately, the Jewish notion of a privileged religion, a peculiar address from God, a secret disclosed to a certain set of people, is very commonly attached to the idea of the Gospel. Whatever, therefore, identifies its spirit with what in all ages and nations has *sanctified* the souls of such men, as through the darkness of heathenism, shine still as stars of the first magnitude in virtue, is rejected as totally unchristian, as Deistical.

I recommend you to read John Woolman's book before you return it to the worthy lady who had the goodness to lend it to me—one * whom I consider to be admirably prepared by nature and moral training to enter fully into the spirit of the book. As you allow me to address you somewhat in the tone of a father, I will add, that you should avail yourself of the opportunity offered by John Woolman's Journal, to carry on that most useful study which teaches us to *translate minds*, just as, by means of Grammars and Dictionaries, we become able to translate languages. For such moral translations as I recommend, we are sure to find the key in our own hearts and minds, provided they are not in bondage to any man. The *truth* is one; and the Source of it One, accessible to all rational beings.

Adieu till next Sunday.

* The late Mrs. Rathbone.

II.

July 17, 1836.

My dear Friend,

The Established Clergy of this town have most distinctly asserted a right to make their authority the basis of National Education. It is true that they hide themselves behind the Bible. So have all Priesthoods concealed themselves behind some idol or oracle; but whose voice will be heard? Will it not be the voice of the managers of the Oracle? The Bible (it is too well known from experience) can be made to say any thing; if uninterpreted by the *Spirit* of Christ, its authority will justify every thing most injurious to mankind. I will not appeal to the history of remote times, or of barbarous and totally depraved periods. I wish I had at hand a work of the celebrated Bossuet, which I read in my youth, but which I have had no opportunity of seeing again for many years. The title, if I mistake not the words, is, *La Politique de l'Ecriture*; that such is the meaning I am certain. Now that work is a most able digest of what may be called, by antiphrasis, the Law of Despotism. The whole system of government under which France groaned in the reign of Louis XIV. is systematically deduced from the Bible; the usurpations of the Clergy are exhibited in the character of privileges directly flowing from the revelation of God's will.—Believe me, my dear friend, whoever grants the right of interpreting a *divine Oracle* to any man or set of men, surrenders himself, helpless, into the interpreter's hands. What is a priest-ridden nation, but a nation which allows an Established Clergy (call them as you will) to declare what is the unquestionable will of God? Yet a populous, refined, and independent town, like Liverpool, allows in silence,

which might appear acquiescence, large placards to cover its walls, in which it is expressly declared that National Education must be based on the Bible, and that the Clergy of the Established Church have a right to superintend and direct the earliest study of the Sacred Books.

There are certain errors which, having been transmitted for many ages in a settled form of words, preserve still the appearance of unquestionable axioms. These are the main foundations of the most formidable opposition with which mental light has to contend amongst us. "*Religion must be the basis of all good Education.*" At the high sound of this declaration all, more or less, bow consent. Yet what is the practical meaning of this pretended first principle? How does it happen that the word religion is, in this case, taken as a term incapable of any but one sense? In countries where, to the shame of civilization, the power of the government is engaged to prevent the expression of doubt in regard to the exclusive truth of the doctrines and practices maintained by a favoured priesthood, the proposition in question can have but one meaning, however false it may be. *Religion* means, in such countries, a definite thing. But what does it mean in the British empire? Can any one acquaint me with that sense of the word religion which produces this wonderful consent among sects who mutually and fiercely condemn each other, as propagators of the most mischievous errors? I believe not. Perhaps, however, I shall be able to discover that mysterious sense—the cause of this singular unanimity.

Since the contending parties cannot be supposed to approve the opposite dogmas which struggle for diffusion by means of education, and none but ourselves (allow me this expression, though it might appear presumptuous in so

recent and inactive a *Unitarian* as myself,) separate for the instruction of children the uncontested from the disputed parts of Christianity—the words *religious instruction* or *religion* can have but one sense capable of obtaining assent from all. By *religion* they must mean *clerical* or *priestly* instruction. In this sense it is, I am sure, that all agree in the proposition, "*religious* instruction must be the basis of all good education." *Religious instruction*, by the tacit consent of parties, each of which has despaired of obtaining the mastery to the exclusion of all others, means *instruction according to the opinions of some priesthood*—some set of men claiming a more direct communication with the Deity than all the rest of mankind:—some combination of managers of the common oracle—the Bible. Despairing, at least for the present, of that extended and exclusive empire which all dogmatical sects aim at, these rivals for spiritual power have instinctively perceived that it is the interest even of the most opposite clergies or ministries, to unite against that growing spirit which rejects at once the claims of all priesthoods, or would-be priesthoods, whatever. At the head of this temporary coalition stand naturally the members of the *priesthood by law*; for owing to the enormous privileges which the Church enjoys, and the abundant means it possesses to purchase proselytes, especially among the indigent classes, they have grounds to hope that this consent in favour of *clergies in general*, will turn to their own advantage *in particular*; and they look forward to some future period when the Church shall reign, if not exclusively, so prominently, at least, as to cast all other denominations into perfect shade.

It is unquestionably with this view that the present zeal for *Scriptural education* (meaning, of course, that sense of

Scripture, real or fictitious, which, instilled into the tender minds of children, is likely to grow into a stout *conservatism*,) has been made to rise into this great flame. Who that has any knowledge of England can doubt the intimate connection of the Athanasian Creed and the Thirty-nine Articles with the anti-reforming spirit? The *Schooling* which the poor children are likely to obtain in exchange for being submitted by their parents to the mental distortion which is meant by *Bible* and *Religion*, will hardly in any case prove to be a compensation for the loss which the country at large will sustain from their early-imbibed prejudices. Many a humble individual who, now deluded by the sounds of Religion and Bible, thinks he is doing his duty in putting his child under the full influence of bigotry, both religious and political, would look for better instructors, if he was made to understand the true sense in which it may be said that Religion is the only sound basis of education. It would not be difficult to make all honest men perceive, that doctrines so variously and perseveringly opposed by a vast variety of persons who sincerely call themselves Christians, as are those which the Established Clergy wish to make the foundation of all knowledge, might possibly be true, but cannot be rationally supposed to be intended in the order of Providence, to be imparted as first principles in the process of education. It would be easy to give currency among such honest, though uneducated minds, to the important truth which is disfigured into the false principle for which the clergy contend—namely, that the foundation of all good education should be the nurturing of the *Conscience*, by a habitual acknowledgment of the supremacy of that light of God in Man, and by a practical employment of the Will in avoiding and opposing, from the

dawn of reason, every animal and selfish tendency which can obscure that divine light within us. This is the *Religion* without which all *instruction*,—as conveying power, may ultimately become mischievous.

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## III.

July 24.

I am apt to be transiently angry at some of those national peculiarities which Englishmen, in the plenitude of their political power, are apt to boast of, though they cannot defend them upon any rational ground. Yet, though not a British subject by birth, I am conscious of a loyalty and affection to the State at large, which, if any one designed deeply to wound me, he would have only to question. The truth is, that strangers, real aliens, do not feel any such fits of dissatisfaction at faults, real or conceived, which do not concern themselves. It requires a high degree of identification to be provoked at the indulged peculiarities of those whom we do not totally dislike. In my case, naturalization is so intimate and real, that I forget the reproach with which I may be met, and, finding myself quite at home, I grumble like one of the family, and love it all along as much as the nearest of blood themselves.

Well, then, I now feel at liberty to quarrel with the absurd boast, that Englishmen are a *practical people*. If this too often repeated expression were employed as a caution against an excessive tendency to avoid the labour of taking in comprehensive views, the repetition would be worthy of the highest praise; but truth forces me to acknowledge that long experience and observation have taught me to take those well known words as the *ultimatum* of the Will when resolved not to yield to Reason. It is in that sense that

the favourite English evasion of argument tries my patience considerably. Happily for England and the great portion of mankind upon whom she exercises a direct or indirect influence of the deepest importance, *Reason* (which in practical things is Justice) has more power on the English people than they are ready to acknowledge in their *practical* fits of obstinacy. Witness the Slave Trade, Poor Laws, and Parliamentary Reform. What, in all cases whatever, is required is, (to use the very expressive, familiar language of the great Mr. Fox,) "a vast deal of soaking."

I wish therefore that the friends of Reform would begin that long process, in respect to education, by proclaiming in the hearing of the country at large, that however ready they may be *practically* to yield to the present state of *feeling* (for opinion it can hardly be called) respecting what bears the name of religious education, they must do it under an explicit protest against the hierarchical principle which claims the minds of children, as things to be shaped and moulded according to some theological model. I have raised my feeble voice for the mental rights of children, but who is likely to give it a hearing? The reasons, however, which I have stated incidentally, in my little work on Religious Libel, appear to me of that peculiar kind which at first fail to produce an impression, because they are too self-evident. They remain unanswered, indeed, but they remain also perfectly inactive. My ardent wish is, that the lovers of truth and mental freedom, whose circumstances enable them to address the country so as to be listened to, bring the mental rights of infants over and over again to the consideration of the people. At first they will be treated as infidels, atheists—*Radical* visionaries at the best. They will have to endure the worst of inflictions—that of

solemn absurdity. They will hear that the first right of children is to be taught divine Truth, and they will hardly be treated with common civility when they bring forward the obvious remark, that the authoritative communication of divine Truth by the parents, or by the teacher of their choice, would be just, if every one could be sure that he had that Truth in his possession. Here the answer, "We are a practical people," will close the discussion for that time. But the unquestionable fact of the mutual accusations of error, by all denominations, concerning religious matters, should be forced daily upon these *practical* men: they should be made to remember that *facts* belong to *practice*. Their eyes should be constantly forced upon the quarrels of Divines; and when they reply (as I am sure they will) that in spite of such dissensions there is a Divine Truth in actual existence, they must, by repetition, be gradually brought to the consciousness within themselves, for the *fact* that religious questions turn exclusively upon the *impressions* which that objective Divine Truth makes upon each individual. But I need not repeat what I have already published in print. I wish the friends of education would take this important, this truly fundamental point into consideration—Whether infants have, or have not, natural mental rights, which it is the duty of all parents to respect: Whether, on the mere authority of the parents, and in total disregard of the almost infinite multitude of chances which error has above truth, if that plan be followed, the power of future individual choice,—a choice unprejudiced and impartial,—should be taken away from the children to the utmost of the parents' power?—This is a question of mighty import; as long as education proceeds as it is promoted at present, I cannot look upon it otherwise than as a

system of mental slavery, a spiritual kidnapping exercised by the members of the various hierarchies or priesthoods which unfortunately divide this country, and angrily tolerate each other. The Irish system itself—superior as it unquestionably is to the exclusively Protestant schooling—appears to me like a national establishment for Gymnastics, where every parent should be invited to select a person who, according to the most various and opposite fancies, should twist, compress, and even mutilate the limbs, which the system was intended to develop and invigorate.

I have not strength to enter into any details. Unless you take the trouble to enlarge and apply my hints, my Sunday scribbling will have no other effect but that of shortening the length of the involuntary Sabbath to which my body, though not my mind, is condemned. The latter is, thank heaven, still active enough to laugh at Sir A. A. and his party.

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IV.

July 31, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I am this moment come back from your chapel, where, however, I missed you. Yet in spite of what, without disparagement to others who may supply your place, is always a disappointment to me, I am become so incorporated and associated with your congregation that, though unacquainted with most of those who compose it, I always return with that feeling of satisfaction which arises from having met one's friends. It does me good to see the faces with which I am now familiar; and I bring back a secret assurance that I have been in company with a considerable number of kind-hearted, benevolent, and upright people, who have a

certain sympathy with me, and would be glad to show it me if an opportunity offered. This is one of the benefits arising from social worship, a practice eminently Christian, but which loses much of its moral effect when people meet in great numbers. I would not have chapels much larger than ours; the members of a congregation should know each other, at least, by sight; there should exist a degree of fraternity among them. Would heaven that manners and national temper admitted of making the religious meetings of Unitarians still more truly social! but I must not indulge my *radicalism*; there is enough, and more than enough, to make me every day rejoice in the company of the particular class of Christians with whom I am associated; and indeed it was with the intention of expressing my increasing satisfaction that I took up the pen.

I was thinking during the Sermon (do not be shocked; you know that I can hear and think at the same time), on the favourable positions of Unitarians with respect to future improvement and usefulness. I am convinced that the Unitarians with whom I am acquainted present, as a body, the only nucleus, the only point round which a true reform of English Christianity can take place. Our Unitarians are the only truly religious people who may be considered free from the two insurmountable obstacles to religious reform; they are free from enthusiasm, and from the pride of orthodoxy; they are therefore *able* to listen to reason, which the enthusiast cannot; and *willing* to listen to reason, which the orthodox is not.

Aware of this excellent disposition among our people, I am constantly thinking how it might be best employed towards the desired end. You will probably remember that soon after I settled myself in this town, I suggested a

kind of corresponding theological association, with the object of giving unity to the efforts of Unitarian Ministers, in the work of religious improvement, as well as clearing many points of doctrine upon which there must be still great uncertainty among them. Our external bond of fellowship is very narrow; a mere opposition to the scholastic dreams about the Trinity, cannot give a common direction to the studies of Unitarians. There may be—nay, there must be, a great number of long-established theological errors unswept away by so minute a besom. It is the operation of such errors, I am convinced, that now and then leads back a Unitarian minister to the labyrinthine windings of the Athanasian Creed. Unfortunately the habits and nature of English life allow no leisure for such labours as I proposed. All, therefore, I can wish is, that the studies of my particular friends may take the direction, in which it is not probable that I shall live to see even a considerable portion of the body move on.

As to yourself and our friend Mr. Martineau, it would be affectation on my part to urge you on the very path where you had been moving before you knew me. Yet it may not be totally useless to express my views when they may happen to occur to me with more than usual practical definiteness. I will therefore say, in a few words, what has lately occupied my thoughts in regard to the fundamental error among English Christians, their idolatrous prostration of mind to the Bible.

I am not about to repeat what I have said against the notion that Jesus intended his religion to rest upon the authority of the Bible. Totally opposed as I am to that groundless theory, yet I am convinced that it is the order of Providence that the Bible shall be a common source of

instruction to the followers of Jesus. The nature, however, of that collection of writings evidently shows that it was not intended as a means of general self instruction. I am every day more and more convinced that it is absurd to send the Bible about as an instrument of conversion. Nothing but the blindest enthusiasm, or the most thoughtless acquiescence in the loud assertions of enthusiasts can give currency to such expectations. The Bible itself opposes such extravagant hopes; I do not mean, that the Bible contains passages against them; for how could I, after my long and trying experience, trust in the power of texts? What I mean is, that since the Bible obviously contains two very distinct, not to say opposite, views of religion, it could not have been intended by a wise Providence as the self-working vehicle of Christianity for the whole world. Strange infatuation! Thousands of men who have devoted their life to the study of the Bible, in England, are divided as to the fact whether that book leaves the Sabbath, or some sort of Sabbath, as a portion of Christianity; and yet it is expected that every person within and without the country, and even the inhabitants of Asia, of Africa, and the wilds of America, will be made Christians by the Bible alone! I have mentioned the Sabbath because, being a practical point, it might be supposed that it had the best chance of being clearly made out. But what shall we say to the long list of damnable and damning heresies which divines tell us have been deduced from the Bible, in the midst of the most varied instruction and preparation to ascertain its true sense? Is it not something like madness to spend millions, as the Bible Societies have been doing, and continue to do? But to my purpose, for my limit approaches.

I should make use of this obvious consideration to reduce the Bible to its proper use. I am convinced that the great revelation of God to man is contained in the Bible. The purest light from heaven is there; for sure as I am that the highest truths in the Bible have been also imparted by heaven otherwise than through that individual channel of revelation, I feel equally certain that those truths never were imparted in such purity, and abundance, as through the ministry of Jesus. It is nevertheless an evident fact, that the *spiritual* and *free* religion of Christ lies, even in the New Testament, surrounded by a multitude of views, not only extraneous, but directly opposed to its spirit. Christianity cannot be learnt from the Bible until it is separated from what is *not* Christianity, although it exists in the Bible. How then shall we perform this decomposition? To say that the Bible will teach us, is childish and totally unmeaning, for it is the Bible that presents the difficulty. Now Christ did not leave this problem to his disciples, for he certainly did not leave them the Bible. But since the same Providence which ordained his mission, has connected our present Bible with it, we have reason to believe that those writings have been preserved as the most fit subject upon which to exercise that discriminating spirit under whose guidance Jesus left his disciples. Far therefore from the Bible being the light of Christianity, the light of Christianity itself must remove the darkness in which that collection of writings has been found, age after age, to be involved. The direct inference from these facts is this: the Bible contains revelations, i. e. *instructions*, from God; but as they belong to different periods of human progress, and as they are unquestionably mixed with human errors, there must be a discriminating principle on which Providence

depends for the usefulness of those books in regard to Christians. That principle can be no other than the *conscientious* reason of those who use the Bible. The *spirit* of Christianity was transmitted, independently of Books, for a long period; for even after the writings of the New Testament were in existence, there must have been multitudes of persons who caught (if I may say so) the spirit of the new religion from the simple, verbal narrative of Christ's life and character. This spirit will be awakened in various individuals, in different ways, to the end of the world. It will appear in the form of reason—the highest authority known to man. To this spirit, to this *reason*, the whole Bible must be submitted.

It is somewhat in this manner that I should wish to see the question of the *inspiration* of the Bible disposed of. God alone knows what degree of assistance he gave to the different authors: He alone knows with what degree of purity from forgery and interpolation that collection has come to our hand. The indisputable testimony of a multitude of facts shows that the Bible cannot emit the divine light it contains, unless it is, so to say, elicited by that particle of the same heavenly substance which God has placed in the bosom of "every man that cometh into the world." The Bible, therefore, *in regard to the use which we can make of it*, is subject to Conscientious Reason, not Reason to the Bible.

Have I conveyed any distinct meaning? I doubt it; yet I am sure you will be able to guess what I mean.

Yours affectionately,

J. B. W.

V.

August 7, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I have spent more time from home this Sunday than is usual with me, and shall be able to scribble but little; yet I will not break through the growing habit of putting a few thoughts on paper every first day of the week.

Your Sermon, as well as your Service for the Lord's Supper, were very much in agreement with my views and wishes. You treated the difficult subject of the Transfiguration in a most satisfactory manner.—It has been said by my excellent friend Neander, in the little pamphlet containing his opinion of the work of Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu*, that if the notion of an *ideal* Christ should gain ground among the teachers of Christianity, the old system of an esoteric and an exoteric religion—a religion for the learned or initiated in certain methods of interpretation, and another for the mass of the people, must be the necessary consequence. To this he decidedly objects, and so do I from my heart. But though you are far, very far indeed, from being an *idealist* on the subject of the Christian documents, your Sermon of this morning would be a practical demonstration that, if the emblematic character which you give to the Transfiguration were extended to many more parts of the history of Jesus, a teacher from the pulpit might well present any portion or portions of the Gospels, so that they might be extremely profitable to his hearers, in whichever sense individuals might take them. Unless there is an inquisitorial spirit obliging every Christian Minister to deliver a profession of faith, as a kind of pledge to the Congregation that he will not *think* upon religious subjects in any way beyond a certain form and measure—the most perfect freedom in regard to *history* and *criticism* may be

enjoyed by a Christian instructor without the necessity of simulation on the one hand, or of intellectual scandal on the other. You did not tell us, that unless we believed the narrative of the Transfiguration historically, we could not be saved; nor did you assure us that nothing of the kind ever took place, but that the supposed narrative was written as a mere emblem or figure. To assert either, would be equally rash; though I conceive the first assertion to be more injurious to true Christianity than the last. But why should any man who undertakes the office of Christian instructor be compelled to embrace either extreme? Every reasonable and unprejudiced man, who has studied the Christian documents, must be convinced of the total absence of sufficient grounds for such unqualified assertions. If, therefore, he sincerely loves the human model of divine virtue which almost spontaneously arises from the various elements—moral, intellectual, and imaginative—contained in those documents, I cannot conceive why he should not employ himself in leading others to a clear knowledge and sincere love of that model, putting aside the difficulties which stand in the way of reducing the whole of the Gospels to *history*.

I have often told you that I do not claim this latitude so much for myself as for others. I am certain that the Gospel narratives give, as events in the history of Jesus, emblematical representations which unquestionably belonged to former religious systems. But this fact does not drive me to the rash hypothesis which makes Jesus a mythological personage: I am, on the contrary, more and more confirmed, not only of the real existence, but of the supereminently striking character of Jesus, by finding that all the emblems of the peculiar deliverance expected by the

most enlightened and *spiritual* portions of mankind—of that deliverance from vice and error which is the special work of the "Word made flesh," i. e. the eternal Logos, or Reason of God, under the form of human Reason and Conscience—all these figures and emblems, as well as others expressing beneficence attended by labour and affliction, and finally crowned with triumph and glory, were found so peculiarly adapted to the humble Son of Mary, a carpenter of Galilee.

Under these convictions, I sincerely lament the insuperable obstacles which the established notions place in the way of preserving the Gospels, as the best external help for the maintenance and propagation of the religion of the *Christ*—the religion of the Logos—or, without figure, the religion of Conscience, enlightened by the example and preaching of Jesus and his immediate disciples. I see that men reject that best source of religious light, because they are told by the ardent preachers of its power, that it depends on history and criticism for moral efficacy; because they hear it unanimously declared, that whoever cannot find the marks of historical truth in every passage which assumes the form of fact in the Bible, must bear a greater condemnation than that of the most immoral men, who never doubted because they did not care to examine the contents of the books, which the Christian Priesthood have declared to be as infallible as God himself. As I do believe that the *form* of human virtue which Christ made known is a peculiar blessing of heaven; as in that sense I consider it as the brightest, most useful, and most extensive revelation of God to man, I would, if necessary, shed my blood to deliver it from the theological, historical, and critical incumbrances which still sadly limit its natural efficiency. But the time when bodily martyrdom promoted the cause of truth is

past. The martyrdom which the lovers of Christian truth, as well as of Christian freedom, are now called to endure, is that to which boldness and sincerity exposes us, and to that I need not exhort you.

Incapable as I find myself of promoting the extirpation of the poisonous weeds which choke real Christianity, it is a great satisfaction to my old age to see you every day advancing in the peculiar knowledge which, under God's blessing, will enable you to spread the light which now dawns among the English Unitarians. The knowledge of which I speak is not confined to the discovery of existing errors; its most valuable part is a delicate perception of even the minutest fragments of truth which may be involved with them. This is a faculty which belongs rather to the heart than to the understanding; the discovery of the valuable substance, mixed up with a mass of worthless ore, depends on the instinct of love. A religious reformer who wants that instinct, a man without the tenderness of the purest devotion in regard to every thing connected with God and holiness, must be the cause of great mischief. Heaven has, in his mercy, preserved you from that want.

I am greatly exhausted, and can say no more to-day.

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## VI.

Aug. 14th, 1836.

My dear Friend,

My attention was drawn last week by a letter published in the Morning Chronicle, written, as it appears, by a Prussian Roman Catholic. The writer showed a decided dissatisfaction with his Government, because, as it might be

inferred from the charges against the King of Prussia and his Ministers, the Roman Catholics are not called to office as frequently as the Protestants, in proportion to their respective numbers. This complaint led me into a train of thought which I wish to impart to you, because the observations which I have to state apply very closely to our concerns in England, and appear to me to throw light on the source of some very common errors.

From the moment that Religion—not as a contrivance of one class of men to govern another, but as a reality of the intellectual world,—is intimately connected with the external objects of human desire and ambition, from that moment the investigation of religion as Truth becomes a matter of the utmost difficulty, even to the best disposed and most disinterested men. This difficulty—not to say, impossibility—arises from the double character which Religion assumes, namely, that of TRUTH, and that of an INSTRUMENT of Government. These two characters are constantly, but imperceptibly, changing places before the mind; or rather, they blend so inseparably, like the two pictures in the Thaumatrope, (to use the happy illustration of the Archbishop of Dublin,) that all logical distinction must vanish in any discussion about them. So it is, that when the members of the religion favoured by Government, claim privileges which cannot have any other ground but the preference which the Government gives to their religious form as a political *instrument*, they proceed on the supposition of the intrinsic and unquestionable truth of the established system. So, on the other hand, when the Dissenter feels the disadvantages under which a politically established religion must *necessarily* place all sects which do not enjoy the fruits of the political preference, he entirely

forgets that, even putting aside the question of abstract truth, of which no government has the semblance of a right to judge, religions, considered as political instruments, have extremely different merits; which, if the supreme authority of the state is to choose one, must not, and cannot, be forgotten. The parent error in this question is, that of admitting that every government has a right to choose a form of religion to assist in the work of keeping society together in peace and harmony: for, in this admission, religion is inevitably considered as an instrument for a purpose not necessarily dependent on its truth: if therefore one religion may be pampered by the supreme magistrate, because it suits his views, and strengthens his hands in the discharge of his office, it follows clearly that he has a right, if not to persecute, at least to discourage any other which opposes his plans, and throws difficulties in the way of what he considers good government. This appears to me an unanswerable argument against religious establishments; yet few, indeed, will be able to perceive its cogency; for when advocating or allowing the political establishment of one religion, they will think of that peculiar form as true and good in itself; when pleading for the equal treatment of all sects, they will stand, at least *implicitly*, on the irrelevancy of religious questions to the concerns of a good government.

To exemplify this in the case of the Prussian Government: From every thing I know of the mental state of Germany, I am ready to conclude that the King of Prussia, his Ministers, and the most enlightened portion of the subjects of that Crown, would be glad to be able to forget the existence of both the Confession of Augsburg, and the Creed of Pius IV. But being obliged, in consequence of a fatal error of former times, and of the still too vigorous pre-

judices of a great portion of Europe, to choose a religion for the *government*, and thinking, as I do, that the Protestant, if not absolutely *best*, is comparatively preferable to the Catholic, especially as an ally of the chief magistrate, their conduct is inevitably exposed to the charge of intolerance and partiality. If the government, as such, renounced all knowledge of Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism, and all other *isms*, and chose its assistants according to their *personal* qualifications, it would not be called upon to select for office *proportional* numbers of Roman Catholics and Protestants, or else be charged with intolerance.

The most fatal consequence of this state of things is, the encouragement which very pernicious religious errors receive from the enemies of religious intolerance; and yet, as long as there is an established religion,—as long as the professors, real or pretended, or mixed, of that religion are legally entitled to privileges, not on account of their individual merits alone, but chiefly for their bearing a certain religious denomination,—so long will it be necessary to contend for something like equality for the members of other sects, not as individuals, but as the representatives of certain religious bodies. But may not some among those bodies, united as they are by peculiar sets of doctrines, of habits, of views, which pervade and affect the whole being of every man who sincerely adopts them, be the most unfit schools for the rearing of men fit to assist a government in the preservation and promotion of freedom? Observe here, my friend, what feelings of abhorrence such a question as this would raise among the friends of religious liberty in this country. It would undoubtedly be considered, as aimed against the Roman Catholics; it would be supposed to betray a sympathy with the O'Sullivans and the MacGees.

"Away with your theological questions," would be the clamour; "we have nothing to do with the doctrines of Rome; every man is entitled to the full liberty of worshipping God as he thinks best." Now you are well aware that not one of the thousands who would clamour in this manner would surpass me in the love of religious freedom. But their misapprehension would be excusable: for it would arise from the shifting of the view which I marked at the beginning. The Church of England is established, and that of Rome is *deposed* from its former supremacy in this country. This change took place on the ground of the *truth* of the one, and the *error* of the other. The supposition may be true; but government had no right whatever to decide upon that ground. Hence arises the aversion to the examination of the errors and evil tendencies of Romanism. The friends of religious liberty perceive at once that the politically favoured religion would have the advantage if the question were to be examined in that light; and being convinced that whatever may be its superiority over the other, its elevation to the rank which it externally holds is unjust and oppressive, they take Catholicism under their protection, and endeavour to produce a popular feeling which tends to raise its views, its church government, and the mental discipline of its doctrines and practices to an equality of usefulness with that of any Protestant system.

Much as I lament this state of things, and the deep injury which it is doing to the cause of truth, religious, moral, and political, I confess I cannot suggest any remedy so long as the question is treated as it is at present. I remain as perfectly convinced of the evil tendencies of the Roman Catholic religion as when, purely for the love of truth and freedom, to which it is adverse in its nature, I

wrote to expose its enormous evils; but (I repeat what I have told you) I grieve, that, from my ignorance of the state of Ireland, I unintentionally assisted the political party which, in the name of Protestantism, is the scourge of that unfortunate country. Were I in America, where the Government does not take a party into particular favour on pretence of its holding the *true* religion, I would continue my efforts against the most complete, and therefore the most mischievous system of priesthood that ever stood in the way of human improvement: I would show that whatever incidental benefits may have arisen from Catholicism in former ages, its existence, at present, should be reckoned pure evil. I would certainly add, that in proportion as any other form of Christianity preserves the poisonous root of dogmatism and church authority, so will it produce similar effects to those which history attests against Rome. But since the question of religious liberty is so perfectly involved with the material interests of property, and the passions which the love of wealth and power never fails to raise,—since most of those who profess themselves liberal in their opinions contend for the necessity of an established system of faith, I see no hopes of clearing the question from the fallacies which delude the mass of the people. Catholicism will gain ground as a *religion*, merely because it is oppressed as a party.

Yours, ever affectionately,

J. B. W.

## VII.

August 21, 1836.

My dear Friend,

You have read the very able and kind letter which two or three days ago I received from Professor Norton. There is a part of that letter with which I cannot agree. If this disagreement happened in regard to the opinions of a man whose general principles were totally different from mine, I should take it as a thing of course; but our leading views in religion are identical, our manner of analyzing (unless I flatter myself into an agreeable delusion) is the same; how then does it happen that we differ upon a most important conclusion? This fact deserves a fair and attentive examination. I will copy the words expressing the view from which I differ, and you will help me to judge impartially.

"When you ask (says Professor N. to me) whether 'the essential and saving duties of a Christian are connected with, and dependent on, historical documents,' I should answer it by saying, that the being a good man, a truly religious man, may not depend upon a knowledge or belief of the historical documents of our religion, but that the being a Christian does. One becomes a Christian by believing certain facts, historical facts, which have been presented in certain documents; facts, in my view, of the highest importance, as evincing that God miraculously revealed himself by Christ, and thus affording a support for religious faith (in the highest sense of those words) which nothing beside can furnish."

Here we have the only way in which, according to my kind correspondent, men become Christians; and the reason of this exclusive method according to his view. The first assertion appears in the shape of a well-ascertained

fact: the second as the impression of a mind that has examined the fact itself. Now that which is stated as a well-established truth, appears to me a totally groundless assumption of the inventors of that metaphysical system of the pretended Christian priesthood, which, with accidental variations of doctrines, is always essentially the same in its *logical* character, i. e. in making the effect of a peculiar communication from God, or rather of a peculiarly important event, directed by Providence as a singular blessing to mankind, depend on language, and right deductions from a certain number of words preserved in writing. I call it an *assumption*, and must continue to give it that name till the appointment of the supposed exclusive method of becoming a Christian is unquestionably proved. If Christ himself (as Mahomet did afterwards) had written a book, or if he had commissioned any one to write a history of himself, and made the acceptance of it the condition, without which he would not recognize any one as his disciple, this method of admission would have the same degree of certainty as the authenticity of the documents which recorded it. If the New Testament contained the appointment of this method, it would be necessary to invalidate at least the genuineness of the passage expressing it, in order to shake the established opinion. But the most remarkable circumstance in the case is, that the writings in that collection, so far from making the admission of their own contents the *sine qua non* of being a Christian, bear within themselves indubitable proofs that the writers had no such object in contemplation; if they were preserved, this was not owing to any measures taken by the writers themselves; if we have means to prove the genuineness of the whole or of parts of those writings, we do not owe them to the authors' care or foresight. Is

it not then an assumption, to say "that one becomes a Christian by believing certain facts, historical facts, which have been preserved in certain (meaning *these*) documents?" I still believe it to be so, since *facts*, not historical, but *present*—I mean these very books, in the state in which we have them, attest their *accidental* connection with Christianity. I do not mean to deny the *utility* of these books to Christians, nor do I exclude their preservation from the chain of events which, under Providence, established and perpetuates Christianity: *accidental* I call them in regard to the *essence* of Christianity. Indeed, Christianity existed for a considerable time without any such books, and this is a sufficient proof that the Providence which preserved them did not consider them *essential* to the existence of Christians.

But it seems to me probable, from the reasons of Professor Norton, that what he considers *essential* is the belief in certain facts, as historical; which belief might be equally efficacious in whatever way it were produced. Upon reconsidering the whole passage of the Professor's letter, I feel almost certain that what he considers the *essence* of Christianity is its miraculous sanction; and that, according to him, whoever believes that God made himself better known to men by the *miracles* performed *through* and *in* Jesus of Nazareth, is a Christian, but not otherwise. I am well aware that this has been the general impression of those who called themselves Christians, from the earliest period of the religion, but I wish for a better ground of this view. My reason for this demand is, that I think I clearly discover a very ancient mistake of mankind in this expectation of, and confidence in, miraculous attestations. The mistake consists in attributing the highest certainty of which man is

capable, to impressions upon his senses, not as such impressions, but as signs and symbols of something which does not relate to the external organs. Mankind must have grown considerably in *understanding*, the observation of that internal world in which the true man, the rational being, exists, must have become much more general than it is even at present among the most improved portions of our species, before this error shall vanish. Owing to this it is, that there is not, nor has been, a religion in the world which has not established its certainty upon miracles. We see, consequently, that the early Christian writers looked up to a contest of miracles against miracles as the only means of proving the superiority of Christianity as a revelation; and so they exhaust themselves in efforts to find flaws in the oracles and wonders of the rival deities; the notions which gave rise to the narrative of the strange contest between Moses and the Magicians of Egypt, as the clearest proof of his divine mission, were still prevalent in the minds of the early Christians, and, under the influence of a superstitious education, preserve their power amongst us.

But there is still another error in the theory of miraculous certainty, which betrays its human origin even more than the former. It escaped the original inventors, and yet remains a secret to most of its supporters, that if we grant the highest power of demonstration to miracles when exhibited, the proof totally changes its nature when the miracles become tradition, either verbal or written. In the miraculous operation God would be *peculiarly*, or, to speak more properly, *personally* present: in the *written narrative* man alone appears; and, I must add, under circumstances the most unfavourable to the production of strong conviction. You cannot cross-examine the witness upon a fact

which, according to its nature, bears the character of improbability stamped on its very face.

I have, however, so frequently stated to you the nature of this difficulty, that I need not here enlarge upon it. I only wish to call your attention to the circumstance, that this imperfection of miraculous proofs *in attestation*, never seems to have occurred to those who gave currency to the notion, that the whole efficacy of Christ's mission depends on the belief that miracles took place to prove it. I will conclude this letter with a statement which peculiarly illustrates the almost inevitable errors to which *report* is subject, in instances of the kind in question. In my next, I hope to carry on my observations on the passage of Professor Norton's letter.

I was quite a boy when my mother told me that my father, who used to visit the public hospitals of Seville for the purpose of administering both bodily relief and mental consolation to the wretched objects whose last resource in pain are those establishments, had once heard the Devil speaking to a dying man, and persuading him not to call for absolution. I treasured this awful fact in my memory, without venturing to speak to my father about it; for, with the most benevolent and kind nature, he was reserved in his manner. I had already been some years in Orders, and even had cast off all belief in the established Christianity, when finding on a certain occasion that the good old man was more talkative than usual, as the conversation offered a good opportunity, and we were by ourselves, I asked him whether it was true that he once had heard an invisible being talking perceptibly with a dying man. My father's veneration for truth was such, that not even his unbounded faith in supernatural events could subdue it. He immediately answered, that his original statement had been exag-

gerated. A man was dying in a corner of a very large hall, scarcely lighted up by a distant lamp. The bed was near a large window, which, owing to the nature of the climate, was open, even in the night, affording a view of the darkness abroad. The dying man, a beggar without friends, had refused having a priest to attend him. My father had been endeavouring to persuade him to confess, but had received broken and sulky answers. He retired some way from the bed towards the window, and he heard a voice which appeared to him different from that of the man, saying, "Do not think of such nonsense—the priest can do nothing for you," or some such words. Every circumstance favoured a state of feeling which, in a person so prepossessed as my father, would raise the most vivid impressions of diabolical agency—an agency in which he firmly believed, and which he thought, that perceptibly or not, was unquestionably taking place at that moment. He was struck with horror, but it is evident that his natural judgment, and, more than that, his love of truth, made him abstain from any decision as to the reality of the miracle. He told the event, however, to my mother, a woman of the most ardent imagination, who, without the least suspicion that she was turning a doubt into certainty, assured me, on my father's testimony, that he had witnessed a *miracle*. Here the witness was not only honest, but sober and judicious; the only reporter between him and me was honest, but wanted soberness of mind: that was enough to alter the whole case from a very *natural* to a wholly miraculous event. To what magnitude this miracle would have grown if it had passed through more hands, nobody can tell.

Yours affectionately,

J. B. WHITE.

VIII. Sept. 11, 1836.

My dear Friend,

A severe attack of illness, and the performance of some duties of kindness to two young relatives, whom I had never seen before, but whom to know at present is to me a source of peculiar satisfaction; this combination of events has interrupted my Sunday letters. I take, however, the earliest opportunity to prevent the interruption growing into a habit; for I conceive that this weekly contribution, which affection to you has suggested, and supports, may help to preserve some fragments of that chain of thought which I hoped to exhibit at full length in the Second Part of my Memoirs; a work which I fear my extreme reluctance to travel over ground which I have so long and so painfully surveyed, will not allow me to finish. Nor do I greatly regret that it is so. The internal sources, the seeds which have been unfolded into my present convictions, may *all* be found, I may say, in every one of my writings. It cannot be said that a *new light* has at any time found its way to me; if by *new*, something is meant totally different from every principle which was there at some former period. Knowledge of various kinds has indeed reached my mind; but it has been like fuel to feed the original sparks which have remained unquenched in spite of the deadly superstition which was instilled into me in the form of education, and the powerful influence of authority, supported by admiration and affection, during my protracted self-schooling—my second youth in England. What I believe, what I am, does not proceed from external sources: no power out of my own soul has been able to make a *compound* of my mental character. Many have been the attempts to engraft the wild trunk, and sincere indeed have been the efforts of

my will and affections to make those branches *take* and thrive; but they withered and died, without fruit. And now nothing whatever remains but what has grown from the root. Any one qualified for that sort of observation will be able to trace my present features of mind to the original lineaments of its embryo. My first act of mental emancipation in Spain was only the rough sketch of the now finished drawing; what, by a kind of instinctive anticipation, I settled, at once, to be false in the hierarchical Christianity of Europe, I have, at the distance of nearly forty years, found to be so, I may say, in spite of myself. This might be shown in the result of my long examination of the theory of miracles. The principles upon which my mind has been made up since the removal of the powerful shackles—namely, the pledges given to a priesthood, and, what is infinitely more, to *friends* whose intimacy depended on faithfulness to, part at least of, those pledges—those principles had never been dislodged from my mind: nay, they were never dormant there; they acted, but I resisted, as I thought it my duty, under the influence of mental asceticism —that notion that flows from the monstrous doctrine of the total corruption of human nature, according to which man must remain a monster odious to God as long as he does not cease to be himself; yet, curiously enough, that Being whose every faculty is corrupted, and whose every avenue of knowledge made crooked,—that Being is allowed to possess such a knowledge of what is perfectly right, that he is invited to declare (by a comparison, of course, with his intellectual model) his whole nature to be perfectly wrong. But I must not digress.

It was my intention to continue the subject of my last letter, and show that Professor Norton gives way to an un-

examined prejudice when he asserts that the belief in past miracles, when reduced to historical records, "affords a support for religious faith (in the highest sense of the word) which nothing beside can furnish." But, by looking over my letter, I find that I have already fully stated the grounds which invalidate this assertion; for I have shown that the highest certainty (except by the assistance of enthusiasm) which historical written records can produce, must be the same *in kind* with that which arises in other cases on merely critical grounds; with this great deduction, however, that documents attesting natural facts have the feeling of analogy to support them, whilst those which attest miracles are opposed by a strong sense of internal improbability. I do not question the abstract possibility of proving a miracle by testimony; I only state a universal fact of human consciousness; namely, that human testimony, especially when the witnesses live only in records, has less weight upon *uncommon* than upon *usual* things. This appears to me quite sufficient to prove that "the support of religious faith" which Professor Norton reckons as the highest that man can obtain, is, I will not say the lowest, though I believe it so, but *inferior* to many others.

Early habits of mind, supported by religious awe, are the true sources of the certainty so overvalued by the Professor. That certainty arises from material images produced in infancy, and carefully strengthened, in colouring and outline, during the long period in which the critical reason has little or no power. The material images which represent, in the fancy, what is called historical reality, acquire by this means a vividness which almost equals that which we find in the similar images produced by experience. They unquestionably produce certainty, but the real *value*

of this certainty cannot be higher than that of the source of the images—namely, the *critical* value of the documents which stand, to the believers, in lieu of experience. The strong belief, so frequent in such cases, proves, indeed, too much, and betrays itself: it proves that the belief arises from mere feeling. You recollect when a man with an enlightened mind, and free from the gross theological errors which pervert the judgment of most divines, asserted warmly, in your presence and mine, that he believed in the resurrection of Lazarus, just as if he had seen him come out of the sepulchre. Now, I believe he did not use the proper words to express what passed in his mind. I judge entirely by his manner. He ought to have said, "I believe in the resurrection of Lazarus, just as if *I was now seeing him come out of the sepulchre.*" That, I am persuaded, was the state of his mind. The picture of Lazarus called out of the tomb, which from his infancy had been deeply engraved upon the *reproductive* fancy, was present to him at that moment, with all the strength and distinctness of any event he had witnessed.

But a practical question arises here. It cannot be denied that such pictures have all the effect of reality, especially supported as they are by that notion of duty to believe them, which never fails to attend persons of that description. It may therefore be doubted whether that kind of *faith* should not be encouraged, as the best foundation for the hopes and practical virtues of the mass of mankind.—My answer is decidedly in the negative; but I cannot here fully develop the principle on which I give it. A word will, however, be enough for you.—It is this: Such belief is equally applicable to reality and fable. The whole world is full of proofs of this observation. Paint the greatest ab-

surdity on the infant fancy, protect the picture by religious awe, and you will see the same certainty. There is another reason for rejecting such means, to which I give still more weight. The education of mankind should be *progressive*, indeed, but always aiming at final perfection. Even in the lowest state in which *humanity* may be found, attention should be paid to the natural rank of the faculties about to be cultivated. Imagination and feeling ought never to be placed above *Reason*: both the infant and the savage should be trained under the conviction that reason has a natural supremacy. Both may certainly be removed from ignorance and barbarism by means of the inferior faculties; but, in that case, both will remain children—most probably, *mischievous* children—for ever. Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. B. W.

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## IX.

Sept. 18th, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I was, a few minutes before the moment when this is written, quite on the point of addressing you upon the little school-book—*Of the Soul*,* when, by one of those rapid flashes of thought which cross each other before the mind has fixed its view in a certain direction, my purpose was instantly changed. The change, however, was not the effect of levity or caprice; there is, indeed, a cogent reason for it: and as I saw that reason clearly at once, no room was left for hesitation. My observations on the pre-

[* Gallaudet's.]

tending little book of the American clergyman who assumes the garb of a philosopher to pass the grossest errors upon the unsuspecting minds of parents, otherwise well inclined to give their children an education above the common routine—may be delayed. Not so the practical suggestion which I wish to be communicated through you, according to your judgment, to such friends as may be able to give it effect if it should meet with their approbation. But to the point.—An Advertisement in the *Christian Teacher* has made me acquainted with the existence of a *Lancashire and Cheshire Presbyterian Association*, established upon a principle so superior to every declaration ever made in England (at least to my knowledge) upon a similar occasion, that I should cease to be myself, if I could let it pass as a mere matter of form, or take a merely passive interest in its working. The principle to which I allude is excellently expressed in these words:—

"The society is an association of English Presbyterians and other Protestant Dissenters, holding the right of the free and unlimited exercise of private judgment in matters of religion, and of full Christian communion, on the great principle of the divine mission of our Lord, without any other doctrinal test whatever."

Now, that the originators of that noble declaration are fully aware both of its *truth*, and of the extent of its application, I have no reason to doubt. What I certainly question is, the probability of its being fully understood by all, or even the greatest part of those who feel a real sympathy with the *sentiment* it conveys. To express myself more clearly: no one will subscribe to the Association, unless impelled by a feeling of the mental oppression still so generally practised by the supporters of Creeds and Articles;

but it is one thing to perceive that we are wronged, and another to have a clear and definite idea of the nature and extent of the rights which an old tyranny has invaded. Yet, unless the mass of friends to religious liberty possess this *positive* knowledge, their co-operation cannot be effectual in the work of deposing that invisible tyrant, that spiritual Pope, who seems to be omnipresent among Protestants, spreading ill-will and dissension, encouraging dissimulation and hypocrisy, filling the tender consciences with anxiety, tearing asunder thē ties of nature and friendship, and disuniting the good and honest, that the selfish and designing may, with little or no opposition, enlist and keep under the banners of Orthodoxy a blind multitude, always ready to support their interest and power. The enemies of religious liberty have at present an immense advantage over us: they have a clear and tangible point of union; ours is still of a negative nature; for most, at least, of those who appear in our ranks. The Churchman, the Baptist, the Methodist, all know the *colours* under which they are engaged to contend against us. The individual has no occasion for thought in those bodies; others have thought for him long since; the truth has been found, and it is possessed by every one who takes the name of the religious body to which the secret of Salvation belongs by inheritance. But the very reverse of this picture applies to the mass of our friends. It is true that they are convinced that none of those religious bodies are in possession of the pretended secret which, in the shape of metaphysical propositions, can open the gates of heaven; but are all convinced upon clear and distinct grounds that nothing of that kind is requisite for spiritual safety? Does not the notion exist that some kind of faith, or blind assent to things which are not

capable of argumentative or documentary proof above a certain—perhaps a slight—degree of probability, is the very essence of Christianity? And what means has a Minister, who knows the full extent of his Christian liberty, to satisfy this craving? Must not he borrow some fragment of a Creed from the Orthodox, and, by the imperfect and unsatisfactory use of it, promote the mental tendency which (till Christians have totally renounced what may be called the doctrinal or metaphysical superstition which for ages has supplanted the Gospel,) must continue to make the very best minds and hearts waste their aspirations, and misemploy their moral and intellectual strength in the vain search of some final infallibility?

And what remedy (you will naturally ask) do you mean to recommend at the end of this long prelude? I must answer by another question. Do you know any remedy for error but well-directed thought and reflection? Is there any better means of exciting and directing thought but reasoning conveyed in words? Has not *Printing* given to language somewhat like a supernatural power? Why, then, is there any Association for moral and intellectual purposes thought of, without engaging the regular services of the Press to assist it? Observe that, because *Steam* is found to communicate impulse to any extent required for mechanical purposes, Steam-engines of all sizes are employed, as a matter of course, wherever motion is wanted; and the time is at hand when this newly-discovered agent will be forced to assist us for the most trivial objects. But we are yet sparing in the analogous use of the Press; we frequently form Associations with a view to the production of a certain moral and intellectual impulse, but seldom think of having a proper engine to create it.

To drop figure at once; the *Lancashire and Cheshire Association* should have a monthly Periodical entirely devoted to its object. I am well aware that it is not equally easy to purchase a Steam-engine, and to make the Press work in the direction in which we want mental impulse. The invisible agent which, in the latter case, is to put the Press into proper motion, is difficult to be obtained. But here we ought to consider, that we waste whatever other means we employ in its absence. The liberal subscriptions which I see already on the list of Members, and others which we may hope will swell the funds, may fee the lawyers in the case of a trial, such as that which was lately decided against us; * but they would not, even if they amounted to half a million, prepare the public mind to condemn with proper indignation the spirit of the laws from which that decision sprung. What we want is the diffusion of light, upon subjects which lie as yet under thick cloud of superstition. But that cloud cannot be dispelled by occasional sermons, or pamphlets, or even periodicals which are made up of chance Articles. The very best of the Unitarian Journals (so far, at least, as I am acquainted with them) are conducted without any very definite plan. What I propose is a Periodical scientifically directed, in all its parts, against the notion of *Orthodoxy*.—The attack on this bulwark of all Priesthoods should not be conducted only in the shape of controversy; light should be drawn in a more pleasing manner from mental philosophy and history. Literature should be employed to dislodge gradually the grotesque images with which an education—exclusively conducted for the promotion of the fragments of

[* In the Lady Hewley Case.]

scholasticism, upon which Divines still erect their inquisitorial thrones,—crowds the minds of children.—I repeat it, my dear friend; whatever the Association may do, in the absence of this intellectual engine, is nearly thrown away and wasted. Our union itself will be, without it, more nominal than real: the Unitarians do not yet fully understand the *principle* of their separation from other Churches. The very resolution, which I have quoted with due praise, allows a variety of construction, which must greatly injure the compactness of our moral and intellectual union. I will not enter more explicitly upon this point, because it would be doing little justice to a very important subject, just to propose a startling problem, and drop it before I could even indicate the way to work it. What I only wish for is your assistance in suggesting the necessity of having a periodical in direct connection with the Association. The distracted condition of the Christian world, owing to the *extraneous Influences* which constantly interfere with the Study of Christianity, requires from all who love it, that the formation of a nucleus of Light and Liberty should be attempted.

The chief among these disturbing and perverting Influences is that of *despotic* Education. An almost infinite variety of individuals, disagreeing with others in religious views, or rather vehemently condemning each other upon those points, have become unanimous upon this—that each has an unquestionable right to treat the opening minds of their respective children in a manner that, as far as in them lies, those minds shall be disabled to see the subject of religion in any other light but that of their own parents and teachers. It is astonishing with what eagerness, with what passionate obstinacy, the most discordant Religionists maintain this unqualified right of parents—a right which

demonstratively gives a monstrous advantage to what each of its defenders most decidedly condemns as soul-destructive error;—not unlike the combination of the old feudal lords to maintain their respective tyranny over their own vassals, however strongly the individuals forming this coalition might disapprove of the treatment which all other vassals received at the hands of their masters. The truth is, that experience having convinced the various religious parties that it is impossible to extend their particular persuasion over all the world, their present object is to *keep their own.* The indignation of civilised mankind is roused at the idea of parents who distort or mutilate their children, with a view to securing them pecuniary advantages when grown up; but alas! the distortion of the mind, in its most helpless infancy, is considered a duty on the part of parents, whatever the direction, character, and tendency of the distorting and maiming may be. Now, if the first labour of education is the transmission of parental prejudices and the consequent perpetuation of religious error (for every party acknowledges that whatever the rest teach is erroneous), is it not madness to expect any approach to Christian truth and unity?

The next extraneous influence which deserves attention is that of open bribery, practised by the two main coalitions which derive power from Christianity—the Church of England and the Church of Rome. What are religious establishments but systems of seduction, employing the most permanently powerful allurements known to the human heart for the purpose of securing assent to the peculiar doctrines on which the power of those rival hierarchies are grounded?—Popular reverence, subsistence with the prospect of wealth, honours of the highest description in view

or in possession—all is regularly employed in support of—Divine Truth, revealed Truth, unquestionable, luminous Truth, as each of the rival Churches will tell you.—And thinking multitudes hear this, without a suspicion whether they are not mocked by such a statement!—Employ the same means in another direction, and in the course of two generations you may have established even the most diabolical error.

Can we, then, be surprised at the anomalous state of Europe—of the British Empire in particular—respecting religion? It is, it must be, one of perfect confusion and disorder, producing uneasiness in public and private, standing in the way of well-meaning Governments, preventing the progress of education, perpetuating ignorance, fanaticism, and heart-embittering division.

Now, we ask, is this to continue for ever? Is there any prospect of settlement—of even an approach towards a concentration of sober, considerate, well-grounded opinion upon this subject? The blindest enthusiast, if he has any knowledge of the real state of things, will hardly expect that the mass of European intellect shall cordially embrace any of the religious creeds which have so long contended for mastery.—What, then, is the direction which the daily-growing multitude of reflecting men is taking? Clearly that of looking upon religion as a treacherously-deceitful phantasm, an *ignis fatuus* which allures people to the most exhausting and dangerous wanderings. Would Heaven that this state of mind would plainly and honestly manifest itself; for in that case it would produce discussion, and rouse the spirit of free enquiry—the only path that can lead mankind to whatever portion of truth it is capable of in this life. But the present spirit of DISBELIEF among us declines con-

troversy as unfashionable, and is attended by too great a love of personal ease to engage in a contest with any sort of error which does not DIRECTLY and PALPABLY interfere with some external, material interest.

In the mean time, the same spirit of disbelief, but unsubdued by artificial manners, is descending lower into the broad basis of society—the working classes. Left to themselves, or, what is still worse, addressed only in the tone of fanatical declamation, adjuring them, in the nineteenth century, to be faithful to the notions and modes of thinking of dark ages long past, both they and their children cannot but grow every day more and more strangers *in mind* to that still numerous, externally powerful, proud, and obstinate class, who would reduce mankind to the size and shape of their own intellects.—And yet, painful to acknowledge! this class will, for a time, succeed in keeping a great part of that multitude in their pay, and boast that England is, and will ever be, *Conservative*.

This delusive dependence, arising partly from the love of ease which times of general prosperity nourish, and partly from the difficulty of knowing the real extent of a disguised mode of thinking, may continue till either unlooked-for distress or provocation shall disclose where the real strength of *living*, not *formal*, conviction lies: and who could then make the voice of Reason be heard?—who could hope for time and leisure for the slow working of true Reform?

The unnatural and dangerous alliance of Church and State, which makes that which is most contested and uncertain among civilised nations, the main support of order, the most *real* of all social wants, was established through error and wide-spread delusion; but, though erroneous, that conviction was real. That same conviction, though

greatly reduced in its extent and power, still exists in a degree that deserves respect. The idol which it supports cannot, should not, be assailed by main violence, for, colossal as it is, it could not fall suddenly to the ground without danger to every thing around it. Opinion set it up on its pedestal, and Opinion should remove it thence. Long, we fear, must be the *rational* process of deposition; yet sincerity, openness, and perseverance on the part of all who wish for that event, would wonderfully hasten it. Unhappily, nothing whatever is doing with a view to the CONCENTRATION of thought on the evils which are daily pressing upon the country in the shape of Religion. Desultory attacks of various kinds are frequently made against the external and visible source of those evils—the Established Church; but scarcely a word is ever said in reference to the deep-seated errors, the false mental principles, which, much more than its property and political power, support that Church;—false principles, which, indeed, were that Church removed, would set up another still worse, if they had full sway.

What, then, it will now be asked, can a Journal, extremely limited in its circulation, do towards the mighty work proposed?—We simply answer: *it may begin it.* Suppose that it succeeded in forming a centre of thought for eight hundred or one thousand minds,—persons who, having enjoyed the uncommon blessing of being brought up free from the deadening influence of all dogmatical clergies and ministries, have few obstacles to surmount in their progress towards ulterior religious truth. Suppose that the God of Truth, in whose name and for whose glory we undertake this task, grants us the power of bringing those minds, not into absolute unity of opinion, which is

impossible, but into unity of Method for casting off the deep-rooted errors, the remnant of that immense mass of delusion with which Rome for nearly fourteen centuries overlaid the best portion of mankind, converting Europe into an Augean stable of superstition, which no Herculean strength of reformation could clear at once. Suppose this not improbable result, and consider the advantages which might grow from it at no very distant time. Were it only through the regular spread of right notions implanted by domestic education, through the transmission of clear, improving, mind-fertilising principles in our readers' families, what a nucleus of intellectual, moral, religiously-rational strength, might be collected among the Unitarians themselves! We employ that name again, not in the sense of party, but in that of intellectual union. In the progress from the priestly tyranny of superstition towards the full liberty of the children of God, it cannot be denied that the Unitarians have always marched in the front. Occupying that position, especially in Church-encumbered England, the work of progress belongs especially to them: all other denominations, *as such*, are fixed, chained down to the past; they must cease to be what they are, before they can make a step forward. Our bond of union, on the contrary, consists in the rejection of every thing that proposes to *fix* the human mind upon any one spot of its infinite progress. There are, indeed, brilliant, star-bright points in the line of that progress: our eyes turn constantly towards them with feelings of joy and confidence, for they give us the assurance that we are not wandering in empty space without guidance; but we will not stop to gaze at them in idleness; they are not made to make us cast anchor, but rather to induce us boldly to spread our sails and shape our course

by their light to the regions of eternity. There are two or three persons among the Unitarian Ministers, whom I have the pleasure to know, who might conduct such a work with the greatest effect. To any one of them I should be glad to render whatever assistance the weakness of my health might allow. But, in regard to the principal difficulty of the case—the pecuniary funds absolutely necessary to start the work I propose—I feel perfectly helpless, both mentally and economically.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. B. W.

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X.

Sept. 25, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I promised to give you a somewhat detailed view of Mr. Gallaudet's CHILD'S BOOK ON THE SOUL, and I will devote a few pages to that purpose. Had you yourself read the whole performance, there would be no occasion for my criticism, for the errors with which the book abounds are too glaring to escape the observation of any one who, like yourself, is free from the mischievous prejudices which a false view of Christianity has inseparably connected with our systems of education. But Mr. Gallaudet has assumed a philosophical air, which will most certainly deceive any liberal man who contents himself with reading a few of the early pages in the *Child's Book on the Soul*; and as not many persons, besides mothers, will take the trouble of thoroughly examining such a book, it is desirable that its true character should be known, in order that such members of the amiable class just mentioned as may possess sufficient strength of mind to think for themselves, may, at least, hear that there exist some important objections to the

pretending little work, on which it is very probable that they will incautiously pin their faith.

Mr. Gallaudet is one of those men who have a great power of *arguing*, but none of *investigating*. That class of men is unfortunately numerous. They are the most popular of preachers, and, if Nature could be supposed to intend the perpetuity of any kind of evil, it might be contended that she had formed them to be ministers of the various religious establishments (no matter their tenets) which are still thriving on the face of the earth. The most attractive quality of such minds is what people mistake for clearness. This delusive perspicuity has its source in mere shallowness. Where there is no depth, every thing will appear obvious: where a man looks on the commonest prejudices with all the confidence which unquestionable axioms would inspire, there is no danger that any obscurity will remain between his assumed principles and his conclusions. One syllogism suffices for the demonstration; and even that might be spared. This is what happens to the author of the *Child's Book on the Soul*. The well-meaning man has not the slightest idea of the difficulties with which his subject has been found beset ever since mankind began to reflect upon it. With a simplicity which would be excusable only in his infant readers, he informs the instructors of childhood that the task to which he wishes to train them, is by no means abstruse or difficult. The parent or tutor has only to inform a pupil, at the early age of five years, of "one simple truth; that he (the child) has a soul distinct from the body, which will survive it and live for ever." (P. vii.) Having laid down, *as a simple truth*, a proposition in which it is difficult to separate a certain portion of truth, which is by no means *simple*, from a monstrous mass of error and

unproved assumption, the author comforts the instructor of childhood with this assurance: "*You have laid the foundation for teaching him* (the child) *that there is a* GOD, *in whose hands is his eternal destiny; and that there is a* BOOK, *in which he can learn all that it is important for him to know with regard to the will of God, and his own happiness and duty.*" (P. viii.)

The Gods of Homer could take most prodigious steps, but Mr. Gallaudet exceeds them. What a world of mental and historical science he has gone over in a glance! Here we have the physical distinction of soul and body settled at once; and as its direct consequence, not only the immortality of that *separate* soul, but the existence of God, and the inspiration of the Bible. The author, of course, is one of that unhappily immense multitude who believe it the right and the duty of all parents to seize upon their children's minds, at the earliest period, and shape them entirely after the model of their own. "Shall we forbear (he says) to teach religious truth and the truths of Revelation too, because at that early age they (the children) must receive and believe them on the mere testimony of the parent? Shall we hope to secure them against what some may call prejudice, by withholding from them this instruction? If so, they must be removed from civilized society, and from all social intercourse. Are there none but *religious prejudices*; none in business, in morals, in politics?" (2nd Part, pp. 118, 119.) Such is the reasoning of our philosophical Divine! You cannot keep a child *entirely* unprejudiced; therefore you should prejudice him to the utmost of your power. I do not mention this reasoning for the purpose of refuting it; for whoever can for a moment think it valid, must be totally out of the reach of conviction.

My object is to convey to you at once the certainty that Mr. Gallaudet is not qualified to give instruction upon the difficult subject which he has chosen for his book. I assert this, putting aside, of course, the question concerning the truth of his doctrines. That is not the point at present. Whether the soul *resides* in the body as a temporary occupant, or not, is a question as unimportant to the doctrine of man's immortality, as it is out of our power to gain any positive information about it, either by reasoning or revelation. But our Reverend Divine ought to have been aware, not only of this, but of the whole state of the subject which he has undertaken to popularize so as to make it fit for children five years old. Now, to any one well acquainted with the philosophico-theological question on the Soul, it must be evident that Mr. Gallaudet has a most confused notion of it. He is not aware that the separate existence of the soul cannot be demanded as a condition of the belief in the immortality supposed to be implied in the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection. He can have read little and thought less (at least to any useful purpose) on the point which he feels bound to inculcate *upon his own authority*, on every helpless child which Providence, trusting in man's justice and reasonableness, may commit into his hands. Nothing but the most unjustifiable *selfishness*, nothing but a tyrannical love of power, under the garb of religious duty, could induce people to take such an advantage of the unsuspiciousness and ignorance of their children, as is now in universal practice. Nothing short of the power of those treacherous passions could blind them to the practical consequence, that if the right which each parent assumes be universal, error has all the advantage. But I will not debate this hopeless point at present. I only

wish to call your attention to the presumption with which an individual assumes a sort of divine right to implant in the tender mind, not the acknowledged doctrines of the majority of Christians, not the tenets of some established denomination, but his own imperfect and confused notions. Mr. Gallaudet's children, and the children of all those whom his little book will probably mislead, are to believe, on that gentleman's authority, that the separate existence of the human soul is a doctrine unquestionably connected with Christianity. Surely the absurdities of *Popish Protestantism* (and such Mr. G.'s unquestionably is) surpass in mischief those of genuine Popery. That a man who believes in the infallibility of the Church should not hesitate to impart the doctrines of the Church to his children, is more than excusable: that even those who take the collective faith of a fully established body of Christians, as their rule, not on the ground of infallibility, but as highly probable, should act in a similar manner, is natural; but that individuals of all ranks of intellect and knowledge should be taught that it is their bounden duty thus to convey their mental crudities into the minds of their children, is quite monstrous.

It is obvious that Mr. Gallaudet possesses knowledge far above that of the vulgar and uneducated; but I would rather that the most ignorant old woman of his flock would undertake to instruct a child of mine, than see him trained in the theological philosophy of that Reverend Divine. A sensitive, nervous child might pay dear for such instruction. The model-pupil of Mr. G.'s story is made to reflect on the dead body of one of his playfellows, as well as on his own soul, in a manner which could not be without danger to the poor innocent's brain. But observe the profound philosophy which the child obtains at that risk. "You saw

(says the mother) W. B.'s body, but it was a dead body, and *the something which thinks* had gone out of it." Poor child! he might have asked whether *the something which digests* had also gone away with the something that thinks. Again, "That something inside of you which thinks and keeps thinking, is your soul." A clever child might have asked whether *he* and *his soul* were not *two*. The child seems to have suspected it; for he says afterwards, "I cannot see my own soul; but I can think how it thinks." Here it is clear that he had discovered that *he* and his *soul* were two. There is a deeper truth in this than Mr. Gallaudet ever dreamt of, but he made it downright absurdity in the instruction of his infant pupil. Were he not totally ignorant of the subject which he undertakes to make *easy*, he would not have thought of employing a dead human body to raise the idea of a separate immortal soul. The slightest reflection shows that the argument drawn from the contrast between the dead and the living body would equally apply in the case of an animal, and even of a vegetable. There is, indeed, but one source of knowledge in regard to the human soul; and that is the soul itself. We can know nothing of what we call a rational soul but its rationality. To that wonderful fact within us a child's attention should be drawn as early as possible, for upon the consciousness of that fact depends his moral nature. But the instructor should be strictly conscientious, and abstain from mixing with the child's internal view of his own mind, anything which is a mere matter of opinion. He ought at all events to state honestly that the hope entertained by the best and most enlightened part of mankind, that our thinking part shall not die with the body, is not free from all doubt. He should remember that the mere circumstance

that a parent entertains an opinion, is already a very powerful, though quite irrelevant ground of belief for a child. I will not ask of parents that they conceal their persuasion from their children; what I demand most solemnly in the name of Truth, is, that they will state their religious views with the modesty which becomes fallible men. Against this becoming modesty the language suggested by Mr. Gallaudet offends most grossly. "Robert, *your soul will never die.*" "I have a *book* which tells me about him" (i. e. God). "It is the best of all books," &c. &c. I will not dwell long on the use of the most material images in which the author seems to take a particular pleasure, when attempting to give his infant pupil the earliest idea of God. Take only these specimens. The child's father is supposed to be dead. The mother, who is made the pattern of a religious instructor of childhood, tells her boy, "You have another Father: he lives in Heaven, above the blue sky—a beautiful place, whither he will take up our souls." I leave you to judge of the effect which such language must have upon the awakening imagination.

I have often complained in your presence of the superstition which is almost universally encouraged in regard to the *material* Bible. On this point Mr. Gallaudet is unsparing. When the pupil has had his little brain almost turned with the author's metaphysics, the mother prepares a sort of solemn scene. "Do you see this book?"—*Mrs. Stanhope takes a book from the table, lays it on her lap, and opens it.*—"*It is the book of God,* which he has given us to teach us about himself. *It is very different from all other books in the world.* It is the best of books. You must not play with it, or laugh about it. When you take it, you must think what a good book it is, and that God

speaks to you in it. . . . You should always think of it, and read it, and use it, in a very different way from what you do *all other books. The Book is God's Book. The Book is a holy Book.* . . . In the same way, my son, we call a church a *Holy place. It is the House of God.* . . . *A church is very different from all other houses.* In other houses, people eat and drink, and sleep and work, and buy and sell things; but it is wrong to do so in the House of God. . . . The Church is a Holy place. So God has commanded us to remember the Sabbath day to *keep it Holy.* It is God's day, in which He has told us we must not work, nor do as we do on other days. It is very *different* from Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. We call them week-days. On those days you may play; but you should not play on the Sabbath."

Mr. Gallaudet has poured out the vials of his orthodoxy upon a weak, unresisting mind, and I can conceive with how much satisfaction he will think on the probability that the same operation will take place on thousands and tens of thousands of other children. It is to me a most painful idea that such mental tyranny may be exercised by weak, and, I must say, *ignorant* men. But what grieves me most in the case is the certainty that such abuse does not proceed from a mistaken love of religious truth and its interests, but from gross pride and conceit. Were it otherwise, such men as Mr. Gallaudet would easily perceive that, by establishing this authoritative method of teaching religion, they are giving every advantage to all the various errors and superstitions which darken the moral and intellectual atmosphere of the world. My assertion is easily proved: change, in Mrs. Stanhope's address, the word "Bible" into "Koran," "Church" into "Mosque," and "Sabbath" into

"Ramadan;" put the whole into the mouth of a Mahomedan mother, and see whether the effect will not be equal to that intended by our author in favour of Christianity? Exactly the same will happen in regard to every other religion, even the most atrocious and revolting. I ask, then, can those be fair means of inculcating Divine Truth, which will serve equally well to promote the power of error? This is what I would entreat all sincerely pious fathers and mothers to consider. A conscientious examination of this single point would convince them, that it cannot be the will of God that such means be used indifferently in favour of his Truth, and of the most perverting and mischievous errors. It betrays, indeed, a great distrust of what is called Divine Revelation, to be so extremely anxious to pre-occupy the opening mind in its favour, as if there was a secret consciousness that it cannot be trusted to fair and reasonable means of conviction. I repeat that I do not demand silence upon these points on the part of the parents; what I wish for is, their totally renouncing the tone of infallibility.

I have exceeded my limits, and must conclude; not, however, without declaring that if I have spoken too harshly of Mr. Gallaudet it may be forgiven. Of that gentleman I know nothing whatever, except his little book on the Soul. In regard to that production I could not possibly alter my language.

Yours affectionately,

J. B. W.

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XI.

Oct. 2, 1836.

My dear Friend,

The most remarkable fruit of my experience in the moral and intellectual world is a conviction that only the fanatics are

thoroughly sincere in the reliance which they profess to feel on their principles. I do not mean to slander all that other large portion of society which professes to act in accordance with reason, directed and enlightened by principles. I am indeed convinced that only an exceedingly small number are on their guard against the innumerable sources of deception, which most of the civilized nations (and none certainly more than England) have prepared, and maintain, for the purpose of bribing the will, in spite of the *conscientious reason*. But I am also certain that there are many who wish to be honest, and are not conscious that they have been influenced in a thousand ways, to assist more or less in the system of downright deception which is deliberately carried on by many most influential and powerful men. What observation has taught me is, that both the *Reformers* and the *Reformed* of our days are generally *men of little faith* in their own principles. This is not, however, a necessary result of corrupt motives. I put aside with equal contempt the hypocritical Reformer and the hypocritical Conservative. The present object of my attention is that very common, but still respectable character, which acknowledges the existence of a great number of errors and abuses, wishes for improvement, and is even ready to sacrifice something to Reform, but which, at the same time, feels a decided fear, amounting frequently to horror, of every man who wishes to show the whole extent of the evils which call for a remedy. Compare such men with the apostles of Conservatism in Church and State, and probably you will be tempted to suspect, that the body of Reformers is, for the most part, composed of people who love a certain degree of excitement, a moderate degree of exercise for their discursive faculties, and a cheering acceleration of their pulse,

such as a pointed passage against error and corruption seldom fails to occasion at a public meeting, in the *Leader* of a newspaper, or in a smart article of a Review. I know, indeed, few Reformers, either personally or in print, who appear to me really to wish for more than to keep the enemy in check: of progress they are quite afraid; the boldest of them shrink back with horror when the *root* of our evils begins to be laid bare. The Fanatic, on the other side, is heart and soul in his work: he fully knows what he desires, and pursues his object with all the fire of a lover.

I do not point to this contrast (which any unprejudiced man may easily carry into the most striking details) in the way of reproach to the one side, and of praise to the other; my wish is only that it be noticed, and its real source discovered and studied. When this shall be done, the truly sincere amongst us will be able to discover the cause of their own weakness, and of the truly formidable strength of their adversaries. Few, I fear, will have courage to adopt, in the promotion of the cause of Truth, the decision displayed in the ranks of error and old abuse; but many, I hope, will be ashamed of their desultory and timid mode of warfare.

The earnestness, devotion, and union which appears among the supporters of established error and abuses are not virtues. In regard to the intellect, I beg you to observe that a partial view is easily comprehended. When ignorance, prejudice, and self-interest, disguised as religion or public spirit, or both, concentrate the eye of the mind upon one spot, the vividness and strength of conviction are in direct proportion to the smallness of the circle embraced. Men, under such circumstances, have no doubts, and do not suspect their existence, or even their possibility. They possess another great advantage in the union produced by the

definiteness of the object to which the whole party devote their zeal. The long duration of any political system, or of any part of its organization, proves that it cannot consist of pure evil. Among the many profound observations of Aristotle, I have always been struck with the truth and practical usefulness of his remark, that perfect evil cannot exist, for it would surely destroy itself. It is, then, that saving and vivifying portion of truth in the most erroneous opinions, and of good in the most pernicious establishments, which constitute their strength; for both, being very partial, are more suited to vulgar and limited capacities than any very extensive benefit, or very comprehensive truth. Habit, besides, directs the eye of the multitude to those fragments and pieces of gold with which error never fails to ornament its nakedness; and their partial, but clear and distinct glare, becomes a pole-star to the crowd. Hence the strong union of the supporters of old systems, and the consequent respect which they generally obtain from what appears their steadiness. It is only in the extreme cases of universal oppression wantonly exercised by *Conservatives*, that a keen hatred of their tyranny creates a union among Reformers, sufficiently strong to counteract their own. There exists at this moment a striking illustration of these remarks in the melancholy state of Spain. The *Carlists*, those really blind and contemptible supporters of one of the most abominable systems of superstition and tyranny which have ever oppressed any portion of civilized society— the Carlists, though a small minority, are more than a match for the Spanish friends of Liberty and Reform. The Carlists appear, besides, in the eyes of a considerable part of Europe, as more deserving of respect than the ill-agreed multitude whose confused cries for Liberty seem to be all that they

are able to oppose to their adversaries. Another remarkable circumstance is the clear superiority which the soldiers of the Pretender have established over those of Liberty. What can be the reason of this difference? The main bodies of the contending armies are composed of contemporary Spaniards, equally brought up under the same demoralizing and degrading influences. What, then, is it that makes the Carlists more like the old Spanish troops, whose courage and discipline, in spite of their ferocity, were respected by all the world? Nothing, in my opinion, but the definiteness of their view, as opposed to the vagueness and uncertainty which prevail among the Liberals. The most ignorant among the supporters of an absolute Monarchy has a perfectly distinct idea of that for which he fights; whilst the very leaders of the Constitutionalists would find it difficult to explain the precise aim of their efforts.

Would Heaven that the Reformers amongst us should never lose sight of the analogous source of weakness from which the main advantages of the English Conservatives arise! Their union is maintained without effort by habit; ours, on the contrary, requires a succession of partial and collateral aims to maintain it. There must be a Church-rate or a Marriage Bill set up Session after Session, as the standard round which the irregular and mutually rival troops of *Dissent* shall unite for that occasion. What prospect of a well-grounded and steady progress can such tactics open before the eyes of the sincere and unprejudiced friend of the mental rights of mankind?

But why do I plague *you*, my dear friend, with incessant lamentations and complaints? *You*, of all the men I know, are the nearest to my own views in regard to the means for the accomplishment of a thorough religious Reformation,

from which alone, a perfect mental union of the opponents of all Church-errors and abuses can spring. *You* have not the power to remove the mental habits and prejudices which, like an old slave-brand, are still discoverable on many a Dissenting forehead: though you do indeed more towards the final disappearance of that mark of degradation, than the most renowned orators, who shine in the undisputed fields of party-dinners. But I know that you will excuse a solitary man like myself for pouring his unavailing longings and regrets into your bosom. Perhaps when Death shall have given some weight to my opinions, and removed the unauspicious feelings which such a RADICAL on religious points must occasion, whilst life gives him the power to proceed farther and farther,—perhaps then you may inform some person who, possessing wealth and love of mental freedom, shall feel a friendly respect for my memory, that my favourite *panacea* was a *Journal* devoted to the free discussion among Unitarians of the questions relating to Christianity, which have been proposed by the Germans.

Affectionately yours,

J. B. W.

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## XII.

Oct. 9, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I frequently think upon IDOLATRY, and the result of my thoughts upon that subject comes to this—that most people abhor IDOLATRY in the spirit of IDOLATRY itself. Do you know many among the persons who devote a serious attention to religious subjects, that ever tried to investigate the ground upon which the worship of images is objectionable? I believe not. Most of those whom at this moment I call

to my recollection would answer my question, not without a considerable degree of ill-humour, by saying, that to them it is enough that Idolatry is expressly forbidden in the Bible. This is the shortest way to get rid of questions which call for the labour of thought. The multitudes of *educated* persons who conceive themselves religious from the purest motives, would be greatly surprised if, by means of a deep and impartial self-examination, they discovered (as I am sure they would) that it is mental indolence, not conviction, that attaches them so strongly to authority. But this is one of the innumerable instances of that delicate priestly skill which converts our inclinations into duties, provided that the indulgence, turned by their art into a merit, puts the votaries more and more into the power of the sacred order. Few men will acknowledge their dislike to thinking, but with what an air of triumphant wilfulness, with what visible relish of the anticipated continuance of the mental sleep which you have attempted to disturb, will people tell you that it is *their duty* to prolong it! "Let me alone, (I express the true meaning of the half-closed eyes, and slight elevation of the shoulders which attend the declaration of obedience to authority,) let me alone; thousands of miracles have been performed since the world began, in order to save me from thinking, and yet you will force me to do myself the work which I most detest! Why do you search for difficulties in the plainest subjects? The Bible has told us what idols are, 'Graven images, the likenesses of things which are in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth.' Such things are idols, and the worship of them is idolatry. The reason—(but why should we ask for any?)—is, that Jehovah is a jealous God, and will not see his honour given to

another. All this is plain and clear; to find difficulties in it is mere perverseness."

Of this kind of perverseness, neither you, my friend, nor I myself, can ever be cured. It is, indeed, so perversely perverse, that it is constantly endeavouring to make others catch it. Let us, then, try to find methods of infection, in regard to the point before us. They tell us that nothing can be more certain than the nature of idolatry. But they tell us this while their clamour against the *idolatry* of the Roman Catholic, and the indignant cries of those who wish to repel the imputation, resound from one end of these Islands to the opposite. Curious! that in the teeth of, what is supposed, a plain and accurate definition, given, audibly, by God himself, a large majority of those who receive it as such should contend that the Protestants misunderstand the defining Legislator! The case is truly remarkable; and, I must add, exceedingly instructive, as exhibiting the total inability of language to fix any ideas of which we do not possess, mentally, the root and principle. In this view, the long,—I should say, the interminable,—controversies of Christians concerning images, might be made the subject of a very instructive philosophical study. Whoever shall take pains to inform himself of the turns of thought to which that controversy has given rise, will be convinced that the most contradictory among them are *fairly* attributable to the *imperfection* of the language of the law itself; and still more so to the pretended ground and reason of the law—the *jealousy* of the Divine Legislator. Such laws and such reasons may answer a temporal purpose—one of the kind to which the object of the Mosaic precept belonged, namely, keeping a rude people separate from their idolatrous neighbours; but it is totally unfit to

convey to an improving race the idea of pure, divine worship, of which *idolatry* is the natural antagonist. So far is that precept from being a barrier against idolatry, that, carefully examined, it will be found to proceed upon *idolatrous* views and modes of thinking.

Can any one doubt this who reflects upon the *jealousy* attributed to God?—"Oh! (it will be said) that is plainly a *figure*."—Indeed!—And what is idolatry but the use of *figures* in the attempt to form a conception of God?—This is the true evil of idolatry: all other notions of the source of its sinfulness are fit only for infant minds;—by FIT, I mean capable of producing a deep impression, whether right or wrong; otherwise I do not know a more UNFIT, or improper method of directing the opening intellect to its Divine Parent.

It is a gross mistake to believe that, though it is idolatry to fall down before a *material* image, even for the purpose of addressing ourselves to the true, the spiritual, the invisible God, yet we may, without moral loss or injury, worship the *figures* raised by our imagination. Between the Jupiter of Phidias, and the monsters which Christians raise upon the altars of their minds, the former would be unquestionably preferable in a moral point of view; for the human form, animated by every thing which being divine in man can appear through the external forms, as under a transparent veil, is the worthiest *emblem* of the Deity. But the mental idols of Christians, though more misty and indistinct in form than a statue, bear the expression of the worst passions of the human race with a ghastly effect, which must be destructive to the soft lineaments of our Maker's original likeness in us. I believe that if the image of God before which a consistent Calvinist prostrates himself, *in spirit*,

could be rendered visible, it would resemble the Principle of Evil much more accurately than any emblem of the Indian God Siva; for, indeed, Siva is believed to destroy only for the purpose of *regenerating*, while the Calvinists' God employs himself in the work of hopeless and final, not *destruction*, but conscious misery. Let us, however, turn away from this most monstrous of all idols ever raised up by man. Moloch would certainly have struck less horror into a strict Jew's mind than this impious misrepresentation excites in me.

I will now endeavour to state my view of the subject of Idolatry, in my usual way—i. e. in the way of *indication*, leaving you to develop and *try it*. Among the great revelations which God has, unquestionably, made to man, by Himself and within the Mind, perhaps the most sublime and important is that of which the lowest rudiments were delivered to the Jews in the Mosaic Decalogue, and the highest development was published by Jesus in his declaration of God's Nature, and the character of the worship which he willingly accepts from Man. (John iv. 24.) Whatever has the tendency to corrupt the highest source of Morality within us, must be considered as most injurious to man. Now, it is clear that the original fountain of man's true virtue is his notion of God. As at the highest point of the scale of moral perfection must stand the purely *rational* conception of God (i. e. Good), so the opposite extreme of moral degradation must be occupied by the image of the animal—or, to use scriptural language, *carnal* man. The almost infinite intervening degrees consist of modifications of this image; mere refinements of the human model, all material, all related to the senses, or to the imagination, the offspring of the senses and the external world. But between the highest of these degrees and the

purely rational idea of God, there is no regular and gradual transition. The most refined God of the Fancy is still an Idol: the religion grounded upon such a misconception of the Supreme Being must partake of the evils and errors inseparable from idolatry. *Superstition* must exist, more or less, in the mind where such a notion has taken root: the God of the Fancy must be somewhat capricious: his power will be conceived to be exercised not unlike that of a despot—benevolent indeed and kind, it may be—but a power above REASON. Examine the most liberal views of the Christian Divines, and you will find this monstrous error pervading them all. Fancy seizes even upon that most sublime declaration of Jesus, to which I have already made reference, and materializes the idea of SPIRIT itself. *God is a Spirit*, is made to signify that God has not a *grossly material body*; but until God be conceived as that which *Spirit* properly means, he must be understood to be *an extremely aerial and diffusive substance*, something like the Angels, or the *departed* souls which act so important a part in the commonly existing system of Christianity. It cannot, indeed, be otherwise. The immutable laws of our Being forbid that the Imagination should overstep the limits of her nature,—and those are entirely within the world of the senses. We must go higher; we must ascend to that in ourselves which is not subject to the laws of *Time and Space*: we must look into the very depths of our Being; there alone we shall find the only True God.—Blessed be his Name! He manifests himself to us as *pure Reason*. He is himself within us: it is there alone that we can find him: it is only there that man can raise a Sanctuary without an image.

I am about to be disturbed, and I will stop.

Yours ever faithfully,

J. B. W.

## XIII.

Oct. 16th, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I am too weak to think closely, and too desirous of keeping up my Sunday habit of writing to you, to give way to that morbid feeling that would prevent it. Chance, however, has suggested a means of combining a certain degree of mental indolence with the wish of scribbling my usual epistle. A passage in Lactantius, which I was looking over, in an idle moment, gave me the notion of being *learned*, and saving myself from much thought.—What a libel against Erudition!

I was led by the word *Superstition* to turn the leaves of my copy of Lactantius for a passage in which that poor mimic of the great Cicero attacks his master, in the true style of a *Sciolus*, concerning the etymology of that word. It is true that the ancients—even the most masterly minds among them—were indifferent etymologists. Plato is a wretched trifler on that subject, and Cicero is not much better. The reason of this failure, especially among the Greeks, was their ignorance of all languages, except their own. The knowledge of Greek was certainly growing common among the higher classes of the Romans in Cicero's time; but they were too much employed in the stormy debates of party, to give much attention to the philosophy of language. It was not, however, that branch of speculation which could be of service in tracing the etymology of the two *purely Latin* words, *Superstitio* and *Religio*—for both are brought together by Cicero in the same passage (De Nat. Deorum, lib. ii. § 28) for the purpose of tracing their origin. The philosophy required, in that particular case,

relates to the mental tendencies, or *laws*, if you please, which direct people, at a certain period of civilization, when they are enriching their language with *figurative* words (i.e. borrowing signs of material objects to express things of thought or sentiment)—in the preference of certain external images. This knowledge cannot be obtained by any means except the attentive observation of that *appropriation* in various languages, whereby the mind acquires a quickness to perceive the *associations*, arising sometimes from nearer, sometimes from more remote analogies, which are unquestionably the sources of all figurative expressions. Trusting to some experience on this point, I will venture to criticise the etymology of *Superstitio* proposed by Cicero himself. My presumption will appear excusable when it is considered that there exists a complete dissension between two Romans. In such circumstances a *foreigner* may be allowed to interfere.

Cicero's words are put into the mouth of Lucilius Balbus, the Stoic. *Nam* (he says) *qui totos dies precabantur et immolabant ut sui sibi liberi superstites essent*, SUPERSTITIOSI *sunt appellati; quod nomen postea latius potuit.* Lactantius takes up a wrong argument against this, certainly unsatisfactory, derivation. "Why (he contends) shall the man who prays for the preservation of his own children only once be called *religious*, and he that does it ten times be named *superstitious*?"—If Lactantius had known better how to distinguish superstition from true religion, he would have perceived that excess *in prayer for such purposes*—that importunity of selfish demands on Providence, is one of the most evident proofs of the absence of true religion; and where religious practices exist without the spirit of religion, their only appropriate name is *Superstition.*

But to come at once to my conjecture: I conceive that the word *Astare* must have signified, in what may be called, by analogy, the *ecclesiastical* language of ancient Rome, the attendance, in general, on sacred rites; as *Facere*, in the same language, expressed the performance of any sacrifice in which a victim was slain. I cannot quote any direct authority in support of this view; but there are various things which create a strong sense of probability in my mind. First, the attitude of worship among Greeks and Romans was that of standing erect: it is not therefore out of the analogy of language that, as *Kneeling* might easily have been made a general expression for devotional practices among us, *To Stand* should mean the same among the Romans. The cognate word to *Assist* has preserved somewhat of that meaning among Christian nations.—But what almost decided me, when this notion first presented itself to me, was the early use of the word *Stationes* among the Western Christians, to express days fixed for the performance of religious worship in general. The word is still preserved in the Church of Rome for certain processions and prayers, and answers especially to what the Church of England calls *Ember Weeks*.—And here, by the way, I must tell you, that the derivation, quoted by Johnson, from *ymbren*, or *embren* (Saxon, I believe), which means a course or circumvolution, is confirmed by the practice of the Roman Catholic Clergy, who walk in procession round their Cathedrals, or visit some other Church in the same solemn manner, on the Ember days—the peculiar *Dies Stationum*. This very expression is frequent in Tertullian.* ——

[* This Letter was never finished; and the practice of writing these Sunday Letters, broken by illness, was not resumed. See vol. ii. p. 266.]

# APPENDIX V.

(See Vol. III. pp. 164 and 171.)

## PLAIN DIALOGUES ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "POOR MAN'S PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY."

*Layman.*—When I first read your *Poor Man's Preservative against Popery*, I thought I had settled all my doubts. But I do not know how it happened, that the more I wished to establish my convictions, the unsteadier I felt on the foundations in my religious principles.

*Clergyman.*—I am not at all surprised, for the same has happened to me.

*L.*—What do you mean? Are you dissatisfied with your little book?

*C.*—Completely.

*L.*—Were, then, the Roman Catholics right in what they said against you?

*C.*—I am very far from granting that. My arguments, and, more than my arguments, my facts, against Popery, I still think unanswerable. I believe I combated the Popery of Rome most effectually, but I did it in the spirit of another Popery, i. e. in the spirit of the Episcopal Popery of England.

*L.*—Well; you seem to express something like my own thoughts. You left Christianity entirely dependent upon a Clergy; but why that Clergy should be those ordained by the Bishops of the English Church, I cannot understand.

*C.*—No more can I.

*L.*—And yet you spoke in such a spirit of submission, that it seemed as if you were on your knees, promising obedience to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

*C.*—You say nothing but the truth: I felt as you express it. So difficult it is to strip oneself of habits early acquired. The religious feelings of my youth revived, the moment I resolved to seek for spiritual improvement in the Church of England. The zealous Catholic priest of five-and-twenty re-appeared in the Protestant convert of forty. I gave way to the revived religious sentiments of early years, and found myself an adept in the Evangelism of the Church of England. One thing alone was wanting to make me a luminary of that party—the will to put an end to my religious inquiries. I could not do, what a celebrated convert to the same party declares of himself:—I could not "lay my conclusions upon the shelf,"* never more to question them.

*L.*—So, like myself, you examined and increased your doubts?

*C.*—I did so.

*L.*—Have you then arrived at a satisfactory conclusion?

*C.*—Certainly. I never was perfectly satisfied in my life till I attained my present view.

*L.*—And what is that view?

*C.*—A very clear one: that Christianity does not consist in such doctrines as those about which Divines dispute. Have you read my little work on *Heresy and Orthodoxy*?

[* See the dishonest advice given to Dr. Arnold, and recorded in his Life, without any apparent perception of its immoral character.—Vol. i. p. 22.]

*L.*—I have not, and fear I shall want time and opportunity to read it.

*C.*—Well, then: I will try to give you the substance of what I have published since my religious *fever* abated.

*L.*—I wish, in the first place, you would be kind enough to tell me your meaning of that expression, *Religious Fever.*

*C.*—I mean what is commonly called, by a word of Greek derivation, which is frequently in people's mouths,—*Enthusiasm.*

*L.*—I am glad you will explain that word to me. It frequently perplexes me.

*C.*—Mark me, then: Whatever, in religious matters, is done or felt with more vehemence than a man can justify by sound reasons, is religious fever, or enthusiasm. It is a disease of the mind. Take a plain example: The women of the priestly, or Brahmin caste, in India, throw themselves into the fire which consumes the dead bodies of their husbands. They are generally under a *vehement* conviction that, from the flames, they will rise instantly to heaven; and would consider it a cruel insult to be prevented.

*L.*—But, that is a plain absurdity.

*C.*—So much the better for my explanation. The religious act I have mentioned is not an absurdity for those who have been brought up in the Brahminical religion. A Catholic, who would punish the denial of one of his Articles of faith with death, is not more convinced of the lawfulness and desirableness of that punishment than the Hindoo of the meritoriousness of the Widow-Burnings. Their respective enthusiasms consist in the *disproportion* between the vehemence of their belief and the grounds of the convictions.

*L.*—Yet people say, and I am inclined to believe it, that no great performance can be brought about without enthusiasm.

*C.*—Ardour is generally necessary in the practical difficulties which men have to overcome. But ardour is of the nature of passion; and it is well known that a calm determination is more to be depended upon than a fiery vehemence. This is true of practical undertakings: how much more true must it be in regard to the investigation of truth? Observe, nevertheless, what efforts are made on all sides to give people the *Religious fever* as a preparation for their choice of religion.

*L.*—I do not know what efforts you mean.

*C.*—You may observe them on every side. In the first place, what is called *Education* consists chiefly in taking possession of the young minds, and binding them to some set of priests, or parsons, or ministers. The most unquestionable and perfect infallibility on the side of the parents or guardians could hardly authorize them to impress the children so absolutely in favour of their religious sect, as the most narrow-minded and ignorant do in regard to the helpless creatures who fall under their control. Add to this, the connection which exists between the various relations of life and the various religious denominations. Follow the children to school, and to the Universities or Colleges, and you will see the most powerful influences employed in removing the subject of religion from the jurisdiction of judgment and reason, to that of passion and feeling.

*L.*—But what would you have people do with their children? Are they to be brought up without Religion,

till they can decide for themselves on that most intricate subject?

*C.*—If Religion consist in doctrines and creeds, and if, provided they be the *Parents'* doctrines and creeds, Heaven will approve of them in the children,—in that case, nothing is to be done but to declare all parents and guardians infallible in regard to their offspring and their wards. But if either religion does not consist in doctrines and creeds, or these are wrong doctrines and absurd creeds, I do not know how the present universal practice can be defended.

*L.*—Then you think that children should be brought up without Religion?

*C.*—That does not follow from what I have said. If you said that, according to my statement, children should be brought up without metaphysical doctrines and creeds, I would grant it.

*L.*—But what is religion without such creeds?

*C.*—Let me ask, in my turn, what is religion with such doctrines and creeds? It must be a matter of mere agreement among a party called Church.

*L.*—At all events, you will grant that children should be taught the essential doctrines of Christianity?

*C.*—Yes, when we have separated them from the non-essential. But who is to decide that point?

*L.*—I have heard Divines say, that since Providence has not given to children a higher authority than that of Parents, the parents must make the distinction.

*C.*—I think that the true inference from that fact is this: that since parents have not been enabled by Providence to agree upon such points, it is the Divine will that they do not meddle with them.

*L.*—So then the children are to be allowed to grow up like heathens?

*C.*—By no means: on the contrary, if parents did not teach their children the traditional religion of their families or countries, there would be little or no heathenism in the world. Heathenism has its creeds, which, were it not for the early parental instruction, would not present the insuperable obstacles they do to the propagation of true Christianity. You know how vain are the efforts of the Missionaries.

*L.*—I conclude then, that, in your opinion, our children should receive no religious instruction till they were grown up.

*C.*—Say no *catechetical* instruction, and I will confirm your assertion. I believe, however, that the only true religion can and should be taught from the earliest childhood.

*L.*—But whatever that religion may consist in, is it not assuming infallibility to teach it to those who cannot judge for themselves?

*C.*—No. The tyranny and presumption implied in the present education consists in giving children to understand that what they are taught admits no doubt. This is a downright falsehood. All parents are aware that their own Church tenets are opposed by most learned and excellent men. To conceal this fact from their children is dishonest.

*L.*—But how could a child, three or four years old, be informed that the Catechism he is made to repeat is opposed in controversy?

*C.*—That difficulty is avoided very easily by teaching no Catechism. You may teach a child numerous important things which are not contradicted at all, or are opposed

only by men who have lost the respect of their fellow-men. You may easily awake the idea of God in the infant.

*L.*—You surprise me. How can an infant form any idea of God?

*C.*—Surely neither the infant nor the ablest adult can form that idea; but I firmly believe that every child may acquire all whatever we can know of God. We deceive ourselves when we imagine that the usual definitions of God give us any knowledge of what passes all knowledge. The notion of God is in the conscience. A child may be easily led by reflection to perceive his own *dependence*. He may also perceive the dependence of his parents, and so forth. This notion of dependence is the notion of God. A child's moral conscience is easily awakened: that internal voice is the voice of God. Build morality upon these grounds, and you will have given your child a religion which cannot be rationally opposed.

*L.*—I cannot bring myself to believe that the early religious education you propose would lay a fit foundation for any of the Christian systems which now unite the various nations.

*C.*—You might as well have said *disunite*. There was a time when a vast party called *Christendom* existed, but as it derived its union by contrast with, and opposition to, Mahometanism, no sooner did the followers of Mahomet cease to be formidable, than even the word Christendom fell into disuse. But I grant you, that were it not for our method of seizing upon the infant mind, neither Catholicism nor Protestantism would make many proselytes among adults. This, however, utterly condemns our system of Education; for do you conceive that any system which equally promotes all manner of Religions, not only those

which bear the common denomination of Christianity, but also the most horrible and disgusting, can be right? Now this is unquestionably the case all over the world. Parents and national Priesthoods make the children under their influence be whatever they please. The attachment to what they are thus taught is equal, though the instructions may be contradictory. Add to this the bribery of honours, emoluments, advantages of all kinds, which tempt one generation after another as they grow up, and you will agree that truth cannot gain by the existing state of things.

*L.*—I confess that the subject, *theoretically* examined, leads to your conclusion.

*C.*—You lay a stress on the word *theoretically*, as if wishing to give, by that means, an exclusion to the theoretical method in point of religion. But examine for a few moments whether the truth or falsehood of a religion can be treated any way but theoretically.

*L.*—Why should it not be treated *practically*?

*C.*—Because all the contending religions are *theories*, and theories of that peculiar character, that they all proceed upon the ground, not only of *theoretical*, but *exclusive* truth. The religious *theories* in which we are concerned are reduced to these questions:—1st. Has God made some particular discoveries to some men in early times?—2nd. Have these discoveries been transmitted with accuracy and authenticity to all subsequent ages?—3rd. Which of the religious sects who claim the exclusive possession of these divine communications, is entitled to our acceptance? Are not these *theoretical* questions?

*L.*—I am not learned enough to say whether the name theoretical applies properly to such questions; but common sense tells me they are not practical.

*C.*—Certainly not. They are chiefly *historical.*

*L.*—How so?

*C.*—Because they depend upon the investigation of facts said to *have happened* before our times. Such investigation is history.

*L.*—And have we to investigate whether things which are supposed to have taken place four thousand and more years ago, did really happen as we are told?

*C.*—If religion consists in the usual doctrines, we must be bound to that investigation.

*L.*—What, sir! Is every poor creature who scarcely has time to earn his bread, to examine such historical questions?

*C.*—Either the creatures to whom you allude must examine those points, or believe them on the authority of others.

*L.*—I confess I am perplexed; for in what class of people shall we recognize an authority to guide the belief of the uninstructed classes?

*C.*—I certainly cannot help you out of that difficulty.

*L.*—Will not the Clergy?

*C.*—*What!* The clergies contend fiercely; and, what is worse in respect of what we discuss, they contend most *learnedly.* How then can the mass of the people decide to whom they are to surrender themselves?

*L.*—There must be an essential mistake which pervades the whole of this subject.

*C.*—Undoubtedly there is. The mistake is this: from the earliest times, under Christianity, from the remotest periods of antiquity, religion has been considered a matter of authority. We cannot well get rid of this notion.

*L.*—Then it is probably the will of God it should be considered so.

*C.*—I cannot believe it to be the will of God that mankind should be governed by the most discordant priesthoods; and that chance should cast their lot amongst these pretended religious rulers. As nothing can be more certain than the *uncertainty* of all claims to spiritual authority, I infer that God has not established any such authority among men.

*L.*—But how can any form of Christianity be conceived without doctrines, and without an authority to enforce them.

*C.*—If by Christianity we are to understand any modification of the Church system, which grew up in the second and third century, and filled up its gigantic measure during twelve centuries longer, I allow that such a system is not conceivable. A Priesthood is of the very essence of that Christianity. This idea must be given up if we wish to see light in the questions which agitate us at present.

*L.*—But can we make a *Christianity* according to our notions?

*C.*—The practice is universal among all Protestants. Every denomination, and almost every individual, decide *ex cathedra* like so many Popes, what is Christianity and what is not. Whatever agrees with their opinions *is* Christianity; what differs from them *is not* Christianity.

*L.*—Would it not be better to return to the Catholic Church, where, at all events, there exists an authority recognized by most Christians for a long series of centuries?

*C.*—I do not see the advantage of such a step, unless we could be certain that the authority to which you wish us to fly, is really of divine origin.

*L.*—I believe you have proved the contrary in your former works.

*C.*—I believe so too.

*L.*—What then remains for a sincere lover of truth and virtue to do?

*C.*—To examine attentively in the general system of Christianity, all that is practically good, all that every individual may judge of, without surrendering himself to any authority; and having done so, to live according to that rule under the dictates of his conscience, in habitual deference to the Source of our minds.———

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## DIALOGUES ON RELIGION.

*Inquirer.*—I understand that you give me leave to question you in regard to the conclusions at which you have arrived, after your long and anxious examination of religion?

*Answerer.*—Certainly: ask without reserve; I promise you to use none in my answers.

*Inq.*—I thank you sincerely; now my difficulty is, where to begin.

*Ans.*—At whatever point you begin, you will find that the subject will unfold itself in such a manner, that if we persevere, all the topics on which you wish for information will present themselves successively before us. Let us not wilfully break the thread of thought, and it will surely lead us through this vast labyrinth; the method will not be scientific, but it will save us much trouble, and fully answer our purpose.

*Inq.*—Let me ask you whether you think yourself as

religious as in the time of your connection with the Church of England?

*Ans.*—We cannot hope to understand each other, unless we substantially agree in our definition of the word *religious*. I will therefore endeavour to avoid perplexity by fixing the sense of that word. If by *religious* we mean an habitual remembrance, or rather consciousness of the presence of God, in the highest and purest Light of our rationality; a settled wish to conform our will to God's will, as it appears through that Light, and thorough detestation of every thing that, by being in opposition with that Light, is *wrong*; finally, a perfect trust in God, in spite of the conviction that no theory whatever, philosophical or pretendedly revealed, gives a satisfactory answer to the difficulties which arise from the existence of evil:—if you can agree to call such a state of mind *religious*, I never, in my life, was so religious as I have been since I swept off every atom of orthodoxy from my mind. I have endeavoured to account for this result, and think I can explain it satisfactorily. The whole religious system which is grounded upon what most people call Revelation—i. e. the Divine origin of certain Books, proved by the miracles which those very Books relate—depends for effect on the vividness and predominance of imagination. That predominance may be observed in the greatest part of mankind: it is, more or less, the mental condition of children, continued through life. In relation to the Past, and to the Distant, what they imagine distinctly they are strongly inclined to connect with reality. The smallest weight of authority gives to the imaginary picture an indelible stamp of certainty. Against this certainty, historical and critical arguments have no power; because they address themselves to a comparatively

weak faculty—the JUDGMENT—which such individuals have never employed for the purpose of correcting and checking their imagination. From this you will easily understand why, to persons of this temper (and they make up by far the greatest portion of every society), a Religion grounded on miracles, apparitions of God himself, and his angels, assisted, besides, by the contrast of a spiritual Adversary of God and man, who commands immense hosts of wicked spirits, whose only object is to torment mankind,—carries in itself the strongest evidence: it creates a vivid Picture, which to them is the same as reality.

There is a curious fact in the Byzantine History (I do not remember whether Gibbon mentions it) which illustrates and confirms what I have said. The most troublesome and dangerous enemies of the Constantinopolitan throne were the Bulgarians. As usual in similar cases, both in the East and West, women and monks had been employed to gain over Bogoris, the Bulgarian king, to Christianity, which was the same as to place him under the influence of monks and bishops. Bogoris was beginning to acquire a taste for the ornaments of civilized life. He was building or enlarging a palace, and wished to have the walls of a hall painted. The arts were, it seems, entirely in the hands of the monks; and the emperor Michael III., to whom Bogoris had applied for an artist, sent him (A.D. 860) the monk Methodius, who seems to have been an historical painter. Bogoris asked for striking and terrible subjects. Methodius painted the tortures of Hell, such as to this day are minutely and horribly described in Roman Catholic books. These pictures acted upon Bogoris's mind as a most convincing argument, and he submitted to Baptism.*

But far different is the effect of such pictures on minds

* See Schlosser, *Bilderstürmende Kaiser*, p. 626.

accustomed to rely upon their judgments, and to look upon imagination as being, in itself, a deceitful and misleading faculty. A complete picture of the species I have described, instead of inspiring confidence, raises in them instant suspicion. They know too well the nature of the insuperable barrier which separates the visible from the spiritual world, not to suspect that such complete and minute information concerning it must have its source in the imagination. This suspicion is powerfully confirmed by the striking similarity of the supposed spiritual scenes to those of the external world. It is impossible not to perceive the direct tendency of such pictures, taken as matters of Revelation, to establish the perfect correspondence of the world we live in, to that in which Christians hope to dwell in eternal happiness. The reflecting individual, who thus finds himself unawares on the road to the New Jerusalem of Count Swedenborg, and the renovated Earth of the once orthodox Millenarians, shrinks away in well-grounded fear of mental degradation. At that moment, he finds himself completely *irreligious*; the artificially-contrived system of his faith bursts like a bubble before his eyes. With the vulgar of all ranks there is an easy remedy in such cases. Does the picture of a wonder, the account of a Revelation, begin to fail of effect, you have only to confirm it by a *greater* wonder of the same kind; a second Revelation enlarging the first, and giving a more minute account of its circumstances, are enough to invigorate the fainting belief, the ground of which is the impression that the Narrative leaves on the Imagination,

Analogous to this is the mode in which unintelligible doctrines work upon each of these classes of minds. Such a doctrine as that of Original Sin, and its fatal consequences

to mankind, together with the contrivance of Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Atonement, seize upon the imagination as vast pictures of more than gigantic transactions, which appear to float in the régions of eternity and infinity. What vividness of colouring is respecting miraculous stories, —an apparent connectedness of cause and effect is in regard to such dogmas. Disobedience to an all-powerful Being (argues the puzzled-headed logician) deserves punishment: as God is infinite, the punishment must be infinite; consequently, all mankind *must* perish. But God is infinitely merciful, therefore, mankind *must not* perish. Let God, one of the persons of a Triple God, who is nevertheless the simplest Unity, bear the punishment; so his Justice—an inflexible attribute—will be satisfied. The sequel is clear; one thing follows naturally from another, and the whole system, especially when enlivened by the miracles which are supposed to have attended its development, bears its own evidence in the simple statement.

But alas! for the man who cannot put off the habit of examining every thing, and to whom the closest logical series of inferences (I do not mean that there is anything of this kind in the system before us) is totally worthless, if the first link is an assumption. In vain does he strive to subdue doubt by means of sympathy with some set of believers, who "think with their hearts." He surrenders himself with the most resolute determination never to give way to his former doubts; but, in spite of his will, the doubts occupy the same position in his mind, and acquire distinctness day by day. When, in the various devotional practices by which the mental sufferer wishes to fortify his belief, he makes an effort to realize the *pictures* on which that belief depends, he finds them disturbed and weakened by the

power of the judgment; they take the character of phantasmagoric scenes,—one moment they appear distinct, the next, they lose all sharpness of outline, and vanish into a confused mixture of fading tints. Whatever bodily influences affect the mind, necessarily affect these grounds of imaginative faith. In illness, in danger,—just when they should be distinct and fixed,—they are found most feeble and changing. I well remember my distress, when, in a fit of illness, after my resumption of Christianity according to the Church of England, I found that I really did not believe in the Trinity, or in the Atonement. My acquiescence had been an act of the will; my Reason had been forcibly silenced by that will; it now resumed its authority, and I found myself cruelly deceived. Nevertheless, the early habits of my mind connected this incapacity of belief with crime and punishment. I cannot, indeed, describe the periods of mental agony which I have gone through. It did not avail that I repeatedly fell upon my knees; the vehemence of my prayer could not remove an intimate conviction that I was pursuing phantoms. As soon, however, as I gave full freedom to my judgment, and arrived at the conclusion that Christianity is not *Orthodoxy*—that God has not furnished us with means of coming to any degree of certainty in regard to any church-doctrines whatever,—that he has not provided us even with sufficient proofs of the authenticity of the Books which make up the Bible, much less with any satisfactory voucher of their being inspired, —as soon as that whirling cloud of theological doctrines was scattered before the pure light of reason, my soul found itself in perfect repose. My trust in God, as I know him in the sanctuary of my conscience, grew day by day, in spite of trouble and suffering: all fears of dangers after this

life vanished at once before the certainty of my sincere wish and constant effort to live according to God's will: the contradictions and absurdities of a *local* Heaven ceased to represent a future life as a mockery; and, ever since that period, I may say that my *existence* is totally religious. I do not mean that I live in mystic raptures, or that I have subdued the feelings of impatience which my constant sufferings are apt to raise: far from it. But in the midst of even childish peevishness, the superior faculty of my mind looks with pain upon these infirmities, and strives to bring my whole being into conformity with the will of God.*

One of the, to me, most important results of my long and active attention to these subjects is, the conviction that what is called SPIRITUALISM leads directly and inevitably to materialism in religion,—in plainer words, to IDOLATRY. I hope soon to explain my words, so as to remove all appearance of paradox: indeed, I have already shown that, what is called *supernaturalism*, i. e. making religion inseparable from a long series of apparitions, such as we find in the Books which bear the name of Moses, reduces it to a work of the Imagination,—a faculty which is essentially *material*, as its name, derived from IMAGE, plainly denotes. This *imaginative* religion, supported by the universal tendency of mankind to give to things invisible the shape of things visible, is, I am convinced, the greatest impediment to the existence and propagation of that spiritual character of the true worshippers, who worship God, the Spirit, "in spirit and in truth."

Many Philosophers, and almost all Divines, have positively asserted that the human mind discovers the existence of

* This was written when my life was despaired of by my friends, and when my most vehement desire was to be released by Death.

God by a law of its own nature. I have attentively examined this assertion, and am convinced that, on the contrary, there are few men who believe in the true, the spiritual God. This belief, on the contrary, is one of the highest attainments of our developed mental existence. Yet, though high, that attainment is within the reach of even a child, if well instructed. The only method, however, which can lead to it, is that of resolutely rejecting every proffered assistance of the Imagination. But the opposite is the plan of all Priesthoods. The universality of Idolatry is a proof that Imagination can never lead to God.

*Inq.*—I do not understand you.

*Ans.*—It would surprise me if you did; for this is a subject on which no person with whom I was ever acquainted had bestowed a discriminating thought. Now, I beg you to tell me what is Idolatry.

*Inq.*—I have always thought that it is bestowing upon visible objects the worship due to God.

*Ans.*—Do you imagine it possible that any rational being, who believes in *one* God, the Source of all existence, can fall into that absurdity? I am convinced no man was ever guilty of such a contradiction.

*Inq.*—Why, then, have men, at all times, prostrated themselves before the works of their own hands?

*Ans.*—Because they had not the remotest notion of the Spiritual Deity. The gods of the idolaters are indistinct *images* of beings with a will and passions like those of the men that conceive them. To say that whoever has such conceptions of the invisible agencies of nature acknowledges a Deity, is a mere abuse of words. What the Savage, as well as every man in a low stage of civilization, acknowledges, is, a superhuman power exercised by invisible agents,

who are generally far inferior to most men in moral worth. Now what faculty but the Imagination has the least share in all this? The very name established by common consent attests the exclusiveness of this source of the main superstition of mankind. It is only the Imagination that can produce εἴδωλα—images. But it appears to me, that in your definition of idolatry you imply the common notion that a material image is essential to it.

*Inq.*—Unquestionably. I cannot conceive how there can be idolatry without an idol.

*Ans.*—And it seems that you cannot conceive an idol—(εἴδωλον) except as the work of the sculptor or the painter.

*Inq.*—Certainly; and there I am supported by the whole of Scripture, both in the Old and the New Testament.

*Ans.*—The conceptions which the Jews had of idolatry were exceedingly gross. To the ancient Jews the idols were gods indeed,—inferior to Jehovah, who was the God of Gods, but nevertheless national Deities of their own national Enemies. Hence the horror with which they looked upon the idols. In St. Paul's writings, on the other hand, we find an apparently more refined, but equally absurd notion concerning the idols. St. Paul says expressly that they were Devils. This dwelling of a Demon (a superior invisible Power) in the dedicated images, was at that time established among the heathen mystics. St. Paul avails himself of it by taking the general word *Demon* in the particular sense of *Devil*. Surely such attacks upon idolatry are childish. Idolatry is indeed a most degrading form of Superstition, but such views as the Bible gives us of it do not explain its nature; they do not lead us to the true source of the evil, and so it is that Christians are totally in the dark respecting Idolatry. The question whether the

great majority of the Christian world are idolaters—whether the Roman Catholics all over the world are guilty of that sin, is as unsettled at this moment as it was in the time of Luther.

*Inq.*—Then you do not think that an external idol is of the essence of Idolatry?

*Ans.*—I do not see why it should be. If there is no sin in worshipping an image, an idol of the imagination—such as is unquestionably the God who walks in the cool air, who smells the flavour of sacrifices, whose face cannot be seen without danger, but whose hinder parts may be scrutinized under certain *material* precautions—if such an IMAGE of God may be worshipped with the profoundest reverence, why should it be a moral abomination to fall prostrate before it, when it has been copied by the pencil or the chisel?

*Inq.*—I think the reason is clear: it is "worshipping the creature instead of the Creator."

*Ans.*—May not the same be said of the mental image? But it is absurd to suppose that any one in his senses, any but the Savage, in that low state which induces him to take the first object at hand as his protecting Power for a day or for a season, can be in danger of worshipping a creature. Even in the case of the lowest FETICISM,* the Savage will always be found to believe that a Spirit dwells in the external object of his worship. To the opening

* FETICHE is a Portuguese word, meaning a charm. In Spanish it is HECHIZO. The CH in the Portuguese word is pronounced like the German SCH; but as this is an un-English sound, I have thought it advisable to change it into the simple *c* in *Feticism*, though FETICHE may be pronounced as if it were a French word. Both these words are necessary to denote that lowest degree of idolatry which is universal among the least civilized tribes.

mind of man the whole of Nature appears animated. This is the ground of magic, and of that multitude of superstitious practices which, being incautiously adopted in the infancy of society, cling to it more or less through every period of its existence.

*Inq.*—I fear we are receding from our main point. I wish you to tell me at once your own conception of the nature of Idolatry.

*Ans.*—I will endeavour to do so. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," appears to me as one of the sublimest revelations which have enlightened the mind of man at an early period of his moral progress. But it was not in the power of the multitude to understand it: it fell, therefore, into the hands of the Priesthood, who instantly degraded it into a *superstition* suited to their purposes. Their handy work will for ages be visible in the GROUND on which they placed that noble truth—"FOR I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." What a degrading change was here worked in an instant! The prohibition of images to represent the Deity implied the sublime truth of his Spirituality; now his jealousy puts an end to every possible operation of that truth.———

# APPENDIX VI.

## THE MARK ON THE FOREHEAD.

[Without a date.]

MERUB, the young priest, had left the temple, at the head of which his friends and admirers had not ungrounded hopes that he would be placed, as soon as full manhood had allowed the first light sprinkling of snow to appear on his head. There had been a splendid festival, and Merub had addressed the people (as it was his office) on the mythological story which they commemorated that day. The eyes of his friends—nay, of all the company—were beaming congratulations on the young orator; but his heart was sad, and had no relish for the sweetness of praise. Merub had learnt some of the European languages, and had devoured the contents of many of their books. With exquisite pain he had for some time been doubting the truth of the Vedahs. The festivals of his own temple appeared to him mockery. But what roused his indignation to almost an ungovernable pitch was, the discovery that many of the priests laughed at the sacred books in secret, but would have shed Merub's blood if he had expressed a doubt about them. "Alas!" he said to himself, "shall *I* also support the deception? I would much rather die. Oh, that I could transfer myself to those fortunate countries where men's understandings are free!" Entirely wrapped up in these thoughts, he instinctively avoided the crowd, and after

a long, but almost unconscious walk, he found himself at the foot of the mountain which rises abruptly in view of the splendid building where he had been officiating. The rock rose nearly perpendicularly to the height of one thousand feet at once. The clouds were seen reposing on the ledge which terminated this immense rock, forming, as it were, the first of several steps, too steep and high even for the giants of fable.

Merub awoke from his reverie to contemplate the stupendous mass before him. "Well could I (he said to himself) dwell in a cavern at the top of this mountain, if some beneficent being among those who probably surround us, invisible, would take me under his protection. Oh, that the Genius of Truth would listen to my ardent prayers! But is there such a thing as Truth?"—Hardly had Merub pronounced these words with a deep sigh, when, among the brambles which thickly covered some of the lowest projections of the rock, he thought he discovered the print of a human foot. He approached the spot with eager curiosity, and could not but start back on perceiving that it was stamped in blood. Though extremely sensitive, Merub was not deficient in intellectual courage. The foot-print was bloody, and he well perceived that the utmost care could not prevent his refreshing the mark in the same way, should he venture to step upon it. He feared, but, in spite of fear, he set his bare foot on the rock. The pain occasioned by the brambles was great. He tried to assist himself with his hands, but they were soon as much torn as his feet. From one projection of the rock to another the unhappy Merub had climbed to a great height, when suddenly he discovered the entrance of a cave. Under the glare of a tropic sun the cave was dark, and looked fearful. Some

monster might inhabit it; poisonous serpents were probably nestled at the entrance, courting the cool breeze which their breath tainted. But this was not a time for doubt and hesitation. Merub stepped into the cave. As he timidly moved on, he thought he perceived a soft luminous whiteness at a distance. It was like the first faint speck in the East, which the benighted traveller strains his eyes to discover. But the dawn-like spot became more distinct as he advanced. Trembling, yet hoping, he hastened on, and it might be truly said that the white light was now beginning to make the darkness of the cavern visible. By degrees the soft splendour increased, and already the lovely face of a female became distinguishable. But though Merub approached, so that, had she spoken, he must have heard her distinctly, yet no figure, either human or otherwise, could be seen supporting this beautiful face.—This prodigy was too much for the youth, and he stopped, trembling. Moved by an internal impulse, he gently fell upon his knees. He would fain have raised his eyes to heaven, but the immense thick rock was above him. He was too much weaned from his idolatry, too much disgusted with the worship in which he had grown, to address himself in prayer to any thing visible,—else that lovely face would have extorted his devotions. But he turned his thoughts within himself, searching the eternal source of mind in his own soul. "If I cannot reach the fountain head of spiritual life, I will pray by the streamlet which I derive from it, as my countrymen worship on the banks of the Ganges, because the source is distant and high. Eternal spring of my mind and intellect, (he went on in fervent prayer,) since thou knowest that I search for *Truth*, and that all other love fades in my heart when opposed to that which I bear

to that lovely attribute of thy Being, forsake me not when I feel on the brink of despair!"

"Approach, Merub," said a voice as sweet as that of the nightingale. Merub stood on his feet with difficulty. The brambles, and the points of the rock had lacerated them deeply: and the agitation of his whole frame was by itself enough to weaken the power of sounder limbs. "Who art thou, that thus infusest life into my exhausted body?" said Merub, with courage which seemed inspired.—"I am the *Genius of Truth*; the emblematic representative of what infinitely exceeds the knowledge of the highest created being. Approach, and I will reveal to you mysteries which are hid from most men. Yet do not flatter yourself with the hope of science or learning. The universe will remain to you what it was before;—but the eye of your mind will be opened to see yourself; and the temper of your heart will be revealed by the choice you will make; for a choice will be given to you."

Merub came still nearer the heavenly face. Forgetting his former pain, and bolder with admiration than if he had been intoxicated with wine—"Oh," he exclaimed, "be thou my bride." "Poor mortal," (answered the voice with a solemn tone, but without indignation,) "it is but a few moments ago that thou doubtedst the existence of Truth, and now because thou seest but a reflected ray of her countenance, thou stretchest thy puny arms to embrace her, as if she was made only for thee. Dost thou wish to scoop the sea with the hollow of thy hand? Look forward, and be humble."

Merub stretched his view to the utmost, and saw that the vision of the glorious face stood, like a reflection of light and shadow, before the body of an immense serpent, which could

hardly be distinguished in the darkness which enveloped it. It seemed to lie in immense convolutions for thousands of roods. The extent of the cavern would have defeated the ken of the most powerful human eye, had not this wonderful animal sparkled at irregular, but not very distant points, with light like that of the stars after the rainy season. By the help of these spangles, the farthest end of the cavern was, at intervals, visible, though not perfectly. It seemed to open into a region of light, where the coils of the serpent disappeared, as if melting into a sea of crystal. But the eye of Merub became clouded at that moment, and he fell down into a swoon.

He knew not how long he had remained insensible; but refreshed as if by a charm, he stood again before the lovely face.—"Merub," said the vision, "you know not that you bear within yourself that Truth for which you pant."—"How can that be, oh glorious angel," replied the youth, "when I perceive nothing but darkness in my mind?"—"Do not mistake me," said the vision; "Truth itself extends in darkness throughout this visible universe, and expands into an unfathomable sea of glory beyond it. But no man is born without some rays of its light in his soul. Their misery arises from the careless and irreverent manner in which they treat this heavenly gift.—Approach, and I will show you what you never suspected." Merub approached, and the vision breathed on his forehead. The fragrance of the breath was purer than that of a valley of roses and white lilies, when swept by the first evening breeze after the heat of noon. A circular piece, as of glass, detached itself without pain, and Merub lost all perception, except of himself within, of the voice which spoke, and of this curious part of himself, with which he had now become

acquainted. Innumerable and strange were the figures which, painted as if by the aid of the most powerful microscope, he observed drawn on its small surface. Some of these figures were originally monstrous in shape and colouring, and had become more hideous by being rudely scratched without being defaced. Others there were, the original drawing of which was regular and beautiful; yet some unskilful hand had rendered them more hideous than even the former, by the absurd additions and changes which with perverse industry it had contrived. Merub's spirit was exceedingly troubled at this view. "What is it I behold?" asked the youth.—"Your natural organ of truth," answered the voice. "Did I then take these figures—these horrid monsters, I should say—for the truth?"—"Yes," was the reply. "Listen," continued the voice, "and I will explain this wonder. Every human being bears this piece of glass invisibly fixed in his forehead. It is his organ of Truth. At first it is perfectly free from pictures of any kind. But the reflection of the external world very soon begins to draw delicate copies of some of the infinite shapes in which Truth appears in this lower region. Soon, however, the perverse industry of other men, using coarse, earthy colours, obscure the glass more or less, so that the light of heavenly Truth cannot penetrate to the mind. I will not stop to describe the different gradations of darkness which these pictures produce, and the variety of monsters which they present to the mind. Some men (as you have known) have a degree of perception of their darkness and the hideousness of the images impressed upon them. Rashly and inconsiderately indeed do they undertake the work of correcting them. Instead of turning the delicate organ of Truth towards Heaven, and endeavouring, by means of the rays of light,

which never fail, more or less, to pass through the false and gross images painted by other men and ourselves on the glass—instead of separating the copies of natural images from the fanciful and absurd representations of men's dreams, ardent minds like yours call their most violent passions and wishes to assist them in clearing away the pictures. But here they fall into a great and dangerous delusion; for, far from clearing the glass, and making it pervious to the rays of Heavenly Truth, they cover it with new monsters. At one time, the bloated image of Pleasure is laid on it in the coarsest and most glaring colours, and the mind settles that *only Pleasure* is Truth. At another season, and generally when these coarse colours peel off, and, breaking into scaly fragments, make the monstrous figure appear struck with leprosy, many men paint themselves, and nothing else, on the glass, and call their own figure *Truth*. Others cover it with gold and silver; not a few fill it up with slaves in chains. But I cannot describe, one by one, the numerous devices which occupy the glass or organ of Truth, generally by the wilful contrivance of each individual. This is the case with the mass of mankind. But the spirited and impatient not unfrequently so utterly scratch the glass as to render it incapable of conveying any thing but confusion to the mind. These men, forgetting that the labyrinth they perceive is their own work, refer it entirely to the universe, and firmly believe that *Truth* is the name of a Fiction. Had not Heaven protected you, it is very probable that your organ of Truth would have been reduced to that semi-opaque state which lets in the light of Heaven into the recesses of the mind only to show how dark they are. But it is time that we conclude this interview. You have been conducted here to settle the future state of your organ of

Truth. It is now in your hands, and you may take it back in one of these three states. You may draw upon it the figures which pass for Truth among some of the most numerous and powerful associations of men; and as soon as you appear among them they will instinctively recognise and adopt you. You will help them to paint the same figures on the organ of other men, and thus to enlarge their influence and dominion. But if you adopt this plan, be careful never to turn your glass to the light of Heaven except in one direction, and even then cover it with your hand, as in the act of humble devotion: otherwise you might discover such deformities in the figures as would tempt you to alter something in the picture. But woe to you if you are found in the act, or if the change is discovered when it has been made; for by adopting the picture of a powerful party, you cannot but be regarded as a natural enemy by another. But if you attempt to alter the general picture of your original adoption, you will become an enemy to both sets of men. Nor will you be credited by those whose *whole* picture you might undertake to copy. 'This is the man,' they will say, 'who turned up and down his original picture till he grew angry with it. He then pretended to have rubbed it clean; but can we believe such boldness and courage in any man whatever? Could any one of us have rubbed out our pictures of Truth? Is there not something unnatural in the attempt? Beware, beware, of restless and scrutinising men.' There is still another way of preparing the organ of truth in regard to other men. You may paint it over slightly, and so cover it inside that it may act as a mirror, in which other men shall see themselves. This is a most powerful charm to attract them. To recognise oneself as the picture of *Truth* in another man's organ produces

the greatest delight. But the management of this mirror is a subject of great delicacy. If the secret that your image of Truth changes with the presence of rivals should come out, you will find yourself in great trouble. Nevertheless, the charm will preserve its power, if you do not throw it away on men of no influence or power. Make the wealthy and the great see themselves in your mirror, and they will not conceive it possible that such a lovely image can ever give place to any other.

"The third method is such, that I hardly venture to propose it to the mass of those who venture to look into this cavern." "Tell it me (cried Merub), for rather than adopt either of the two already explained, I swear by thy beauty I will dash this glass to pieces." "Rash youth, beware of your vehemence," said the Genius, softly. "You must not break the glass. If you love me as strongly as you declare, and can continue attached to me when you shall lose sight of me, I will clean your glass of its former pictures. But mark my words. Pervious as it will remain to the light of heaven, it will be seen by most men as a black spot on your forehead. In vain will they look for a copy of their *Pictures* or themselves. If they venture to examine deeper, they discover the faint lines of a new picture growing slowly out of the delicate pencils of coloured light which heaven will send within you. But few, very few, indeed, will endure such a sight. Even those privileged souls who have submitted to a similar purification under my hands will often shrink, when they see the lines of your image of Truth taking a different direction from theirs. For neither yourself nor they can, in fact, thoroughly receive my features through their purified glass, without a certain degree of distortion. That happy consummation will take place only

when, stript of that frail body, you will have no need of a glass to catch the reflection of Truth, but shall behold it face to face. Have then courage and resolution to wander through life with a few who will recognize you as a brother, while mankind turn away from you, and, observing the indistinct spot on your forehead, take you for another Cain."

"Here is my glass," said Merub, "wipe it clean, and be my lot with the few."

Here the young priest lost himself as in a deep sleep. The rays of the rising sun awoke him on the coast of the sea. He saw the sails of a ship vanishing in the distant horizon. A crowd of busy men soon after came near him; but no one knew him. He looked for the temple he had left, and was glad that its pinnacles did not appear in the distance, and the sound of the instruments which called to a mockery of prayer did not rouse his indignant soul. People at length observed him, and asked him what was his business in this land. He answered, he did not know; but he came to search for the picture of Truth. Every one showed him his own, and expected to find it in his forehead. But on observing the dark spot produced by the cavity which had been prepared for the heavenly picture, all turned away with more or less horror. A few persons, however, bearing the same vacant space outside, and showing, when attentively examined, the growing image within, greeted him as a brother.—The Dervish who brought this account to the East, says he saw Merub, already an old man, weak, and looking towards the grave for rest, and the enjoyment of his beloved Truth to whom he firmly hoped to be united.

# A LIST OF MR. WHITE'S WRITINGS.

IN SPANISH.

1.—A Sermon on the Evidences of Christianity, preached in the Royal Chapel, Seville. (See Vol. i. p. 113.)

2.—A Work on the Slave Trade. (See Vol. iii. pp. 174 and 180.)

*Periodicals.*

1.—The SEMANARIO PATRIOTICO, a Weekly Journal, published at Seville, in 1808, of which he was joint Editor with Antillon. (Vol. i. p. 145, and Appendix ii. pp. 317-21.)

2.—The ESPANOL, a Monthly Periodical, chiefly political, in which he was the sole writer, commenced in 1810, continued for five years. (Vol. i. 181-205, and Appendix ii. 322-39.)

3.—The VARIEDADES, a Quarterly Journal, literary and moral, for the Hispano-Americans, commenced in 1822 and continued for three years, in which he was the sole writer. (Vol. i. pp. 226 and 394.)

*Translations.*

1.—Bishop Porteus's *Evidences.* (Vol. i. 336.)

2.—Paley's *Evidences.* (Vol. i. 337-9, and Appendix iii. 353.)

3.—The Book of Common Prayer, published by Bagster. (Vol. i. p. 336.)

4.—An amended Edition of Scio's Translation of the Bible,—for the Bible Society. (Vol. i. p. 389.)

5.—Some of the Homilies,—for the Prayer Book and Homily Society. (Vol. i. p. 392.)

6.—De la Aministracion de la Justicia Criminal en Inglaterra. (Cottu.) Published in 1824. (Vol. i. pp. 375 and 409.)

IN ENGLISH.

1.—Preparatory Observations on the Study of Religion by a Clergyman. 1 vol. 12mo. 1817. (Vol. i. p. 310.)

2.—Letters from Spain. By Don Leucadio Doblado. 1 vol. 8vo. 1822. (Vol. i. pp. 222 and 379.)

3.—Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism, with Occasional Strictures on Mr. Butler's Book of the Roman Catholic Church. 1 vol. 8vo. 1st Ed. 1825, 2nd 1826. (Vol. i. pp. 228 and 414.)

4.—The Poor Man's Preservative against Popery. 1 vol. 12mo. 1st Ed. 1825, last 1834. (Vol. i. pp. 230 and 420.)

5.—A Letter to Charles Butler, Esq., on his Notice of the Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism. 8vo. 1826. (Vol. i. pp. 285 and 433.)

6.—The Article SPAIN in the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica. (Vol. i. p. 393.)

7.—Second Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion. With Notes and Illustrations. Not by the Editor of "Captain Rock's Memoirs." 2 vols. 12mo. Dublin. 1833. (Vol. ii. 28-31.)

8.—The Law of Anti-Religious Libel Re-considered. A Letter to the Editor of the Christian Examiner. 8vo. pp. 106. Dublin. 1834. (Vol. ii. p. 46.)

9.—An Answer to some Friendly Remarks on 'The Law of Anti-Religious Libel Re-considered.' With an Appendix on the True Meaning of an Epigram of Martial, supposed to relate to the Christian Martyrs, (Lib. x. 25.) 8vo. pp. 36. Dublin. 1834. (Vol. ii. p. 46.)

10.—Observations on Heresy and Orthodoxy. 1st Ed. 8vo. 1835, 2nd Ed. 12mo. 1839. (Vol. ii. 138.)

*In Periodicals.*

I.—THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. Four Articles.

1. On the Revolution in Spanish America. 1812.
2. Quin's Visit to Spain. 1823. No. XXIX.
3. Spanish Novels. } 1825.
4. Don Esteban. }

II.—THE NEW MONTHLY.

The Earlier Letters of Doblado,—with various Articles and Translations connected with Spanish Literature. (See Vol. ii. p. 256.)

III.—THE LONDON REVIEW, of which he was the Editor. Only two Numbers appeared. 1829.

1. Pollok's Course of Time.
2. Spanish Poetry and Language.

IV.—THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.

On the State of Education in Spain. (See Vol. iii. p. 40.)

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